



ATTENTION DEFICIT DISORDER HEALTH PLAN

The following health plan is a list of interventions that have been proven to help brains work better and focus more effectively. There are many references throughout this health plan to help you find more in-depth information on the website about different listed interventions. If you have not been able to find all the help you need on the website, please use the “CONTACT US” form on the HOME page to ask for an appointment with a Lifestyle & Nutrition Consultant.

BALANCE BLOOD SUGARS TO HELP MINIMIZE ATTENTION DEFICIT

All brains do better when supplied with a consistent source of energy. Glucose is the brain’s main source of energy and is supplied to the brain via the blood stream. Glucose in the blood stream is called blood glucose or blood sugar. The best way to supply the brain with a consistent source of energy is to avoid consuming foods and drinks that spike your blood sugar up high and to avoid going too long without eating which can cause very low blood sugars. Brains with ADD are especially sensitive to blood sugar fluctuations. Here is a list of eating habits that can help keep blood sugars at an even level. As you read through the list, highlight all the habits you are already doing. Then go back through the list and put a check mark by the habits that you would like to try to adopt.

- Eat breakfast every morning, with some protein (i.e. meat, egg, cheese stick or nuts)
- Eat 3 meals a day
- Eat low glycemic, high fiber foods
- Eat 40% Carbohydrates, 30% Protein, and 30% healthy fat
- 1 small healthy snack between each meal, if you are hungry
- Limit fruit juice to 4 ounces or less per day and only drink with meals
- Cut sugar out of diet (1)
- Replace soda pop and sugary beverages with water or caffeine-free, sugar-free fluids

BRAINS NEED A NUTRIENT DENSE DIET

Brains are a very metabolically active tissue which need lots of nutrients for optimal functioning. It is super important to eat a nutrient dense diet. Here is a list of healthy eating habits that will help your

brain get all the important nutrients that it needs. As you read through the list, highlight all the habits you are already doing. Then go back through the list and put a check mark by the habits that you would like to try to adopt.

- Eat foods from each food group most every day (vegetable, fruit, dairy, grains, & protein) [For more information go to <https://positivepatterns4life.com/thrive> and click on the *Eat Healthy* link which will take you to the *Eat Healthy* page.]
- Eat a fruit and/or vegetable at each meal
- Eat/drink a dairy (milk) product at each meal
- Drink water lots of water and/or caffeine-free, sugar-free fluids (2)
- Eliminate caffeine from your diet (3)
- Limit eating fast food to once a week or less
- Replace junk food with healthy snack options (i.e. nuts, raw vegetables, low fat string cheese)
- Increase good fats and decrease bad fats (60% of the solid weight of your brain is fat)
- Avoid high fat foods (i.e. fast foods, fried foods, chips, ice cream)
- Choose healthy snacks and drinks when away from home (i.e. for outings, during extra curricular activities, when running errands or when traveling)
- Take a 100% multi-vitamin every day
- Take a high-quality fish oil supplement (Omega 3) Adults: 2,000-4,000mg per day and Children: 1,000-2,000mg per day

Additional Nutrition Notes:

1. Sugar promotes seizure activity – try to cut sugar out of your diet (see sugar handout). Study showed that when sugars were removed from the diet, the number of seizures were cut in half.
2. Drink half your weight in oz of water – Water makes up 80% of your brain. Take your weight in pounds divided by 2 equals ounces of water you need to drink per day.
3. Caffeine restricts blood flow to the brain; dehydrates the brain; interferes with sleep; increases inflammatory markers; increases fluctuations in blood glucose levels.

LIFESTYLE HABITS THAT HELP THE BRAIN FOCUS

There are a lot of lifestyle habits that help the brain focus by either changing the chemistry within your brain or training it to focus. As you read through the list, highlight all the habits you are already doing. Then go back through the list and put a check mark by the habits that you would like to try to adopt.

- Be physically active a minimum of 1 hour a day for youth and 30 minutes a day for adults [For more information go to <https://positivepatterns4life.com/thrive> and click on the *Get Moving* link which will take you to the *Get Moving* page.]

- Limit screen time (television, computer, video games) to 2 hours OR LESS per day and find alternative activities (i.e. crafts, projects, games, sports, chores)
- Have a regular bed time and get 8 hours of quality sleep per night [For more information go to <https://positivepatterns4life.com/thrive> and click on the *Get Quality Sleep* link which will take you to the *Get Quality Sleep* page.]
- Organize your living space and keep it organized (i.e. find a place for all of your belongs and clothes in your bedroom and keep everything in its place)
- Make a TO DO list to help you stay focused on getting things accomplish
- Write and practice positive affirmations [For more information go to <https://positivepatterns4life.com/thrive> and click on the *Think Positive* link which will take you to the *Think Positive* page.]
- Keep a grateful journal [For more information go to <https://positivepatterns4life.com/thrive> and click on the *Think Positive* link which will take you to the *Think Positive* page.]
- Stomp ANTS (Automatic Negative Thoughts) by replacing negative thoughts with positive opposite statements [For more information go to <https://positivepatterns4life.com/thrive> and click on the *Think Positive* link which will take you to the *Think Positive* page.]
- Find brain games to play that cause your brain to focus (i.e. memory match game)
- Learn how to practice mindfulness – start by focusing on the present time and place
- Memorize something meaningful to you (i.e. poem or a song or important information)
- Use your brain to be creative, learn new things, or solve a problem
- Listen to Mozart – it is a brain healthy music
- Practice focused breathing exercises [For more information go to <https://positivepatterns4life.com/thrive> and click on the *Manage Stress* link which will take you to the *Manage Stress* page.]
- Practice visualization [For more information go to <https://positivepatterns4life.com/thrive> and see click on the *Think Positive* link which will take you to the *Think Positive* page.]
- Use a Goals Chart to help you track new habits you are working on adopting [Find a copy of the Positive Patterns for Life Goals Chart at <https://positivepatterns4life.com/thrive> and click on the *Changing Health Habits* link which will take you to the *Changing Health Habits* page.]

CHRISTIAN LIFESTYLE HABITS THAT HELP THE BRAIN FOCUS

- Read the Bible
- Study God’s word
- Pray to God – the best form of mindfulness

- Memorize scripture [To find a list of encouraging scriptures go to <https://positivepatterns4life.com/thrive> and click on the *God Wants You Healthy* link which will take you to the *God Wants You Healthy* page.]

ACTIVITIES THAT INCREASE ABILITY TO CONCENTRATE

There are some activities that cause reorganization of thought patterns in the brain. These activities in turn increase a person's ability to concentrate. Read through the list and put a check mark by the activities that you would like to try.

- Practice *Brain Gym* body movements
- Learn how to juggle
- Play a musical instrument
- Participate in sports

REFERENCES

1. Amen, Daniel. (2010) *Change Your Brain Change Your Body*. Three Rivers Press, New York, NY.
2. Amen, Daniel. (2005) *Making a Good Brain Great*. Three Rivers Press, New York, NY.
3. Hyman, Mark. (2009) *The UltraMind Solution*. Hyman Enterprises, LLC
4. Murray, Michael, Pizzorno, Joseph, Pizzorno, Lara. (2005). *The Encyclopedia of Healing Foods*. New York, NY: Atria Books.