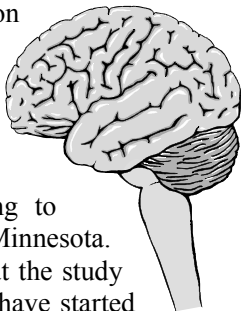


# Super-Easy Brain Boosters

**Eat Less Fake Butter:** Whether spread on white bread or nuked in microwave popcorn, many butter substitutes and flavorings contain diacetyl-based chemicals, which may harm brain cells. Diacetyl promotes the protein clumps in the brain that mark Alzheimer's disease, according to scientists at the University of Minnesota. Researcher Ashhish Vartak, PhD, says that the study is preliminary, but he and his colleagues have started avoiding diacetyl by snacking on unflavored popcorn (they add salt or herbs).



**Sleep Seven Hours:** Getting too much sleep may be just as toxic to health as sleeping too little. Researchers at Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston examined more than 20 years of data from over 15,000 participants in the Nurse's Health Study and found that regularly sleeping two hours more or less than seven hours a night was equivalent to two years of brain aging (as measured on standard memory tests). The cognitive effects were also present when sleep habits changed by two hours a night or more as participants got older.

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