

# Brain

## HEALTH ACTIVITIES

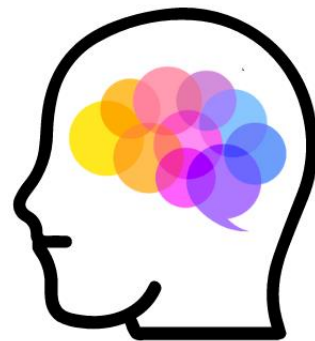


# Episode Guide

## Autumn



**Brain Boost**



**Brain Health 101**

**FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT HEALTHY BRAIN AGING AND CLINICAL TRIAL RESEARCH CALL:**

**SANDERS-BROWN CENTER ON AGING**

**2199 HARRODSBURG ROAD**

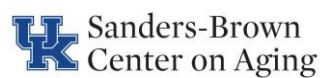
**LEXINGTON, KY 40504**

**859-323-5550**

**[MEDICINE.UKY.EDU/CENTERS/SBCOA](http://MEDICINE.UKY.EDU/CENTERS/SBCOA)**



**Program Description:**



## **Brain Boost**

Activities designed for those with Mild Cognitive Impairment (MCI) and those with mild Dementia

## **Brain Health 101**

Activities designed for those with mild to moderate Dementia and those who care about them

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Brain Boost



For this recipe, you'll be preparing a sweet potato hash. You'll need a skillet and potholder, a kitchen knife, a cutting board with a damp cloth underneath, cooking oil and a large bowl for discarding scraps.

## Ingredients

A large sweet potato, pre-cooked, peeled, and diced.

2 medium carrots or parsnips, thinly sliced

2 cups winter greens, washed, stemmed, and chopped if necessary

½ onion, diced

½ sweet bell pepper, diced

1 apple, cored and diced

¼ head of cabbage, sliced thin or chopped.

3 cloves of garlic, minced, but could substitute 1 teaspoon garlic powder

2 tablespoons oil

Salt and pepper to taste

Apple cider vinaigrette, prepared

**Remember, Safety comes first! Always use caution when working with knives or hot burners. Set an alarm to remind yourself of cooking times or to turn off an appliance.**

Wash your hands often, and dry them so as not to slip when using kitchen items. Ask for help when needed.

## **Instructions**

Chop vegetables, apples, and herbs.

Heat a large skillet on medium-high.

Add oil to coat the bottom of the pan. If the pan is smoking, turn the heat down.

Gently add onions and red pepper to the pan.

Stir.

When the onion becomes clear or translucent, add carrots and apples.

Stir from time to time.

When the apples start to get brown from cooking, add cabbage to the pan.

Cook to desired texture, a little crunchy or soft.

Add 1/8 teaspoon salt.

Stir.

Add garlic and sauté for 1 minute.

Add cooked sweet potato.

Stir and heat through.



Add kale until it wilts.

Stir gently.

Add a little more salt and pepper.

Turn heat down.

Drizzle vinaigrette into the pan and stir.

To serve, put on plates and add smashed nuts and fresh herbs.



## Modifications

This is an activity with many steps. To modify the activity, you may want to have your loved one assist with parts of the activity, always focusing on what he or she CAN do. If vision or shakiness is a concern, it is probably best that the care partner do the cutting.

A person with dementia can act as the “sous chef,” assisting in the kitchen. This role includes washing, scooping, scraping, getting things ready, and cleaning the kitchen. Helping organize is the role of the sous chef!

This activity usually begins with a trip to the grocery store, and choosing fresh vegetables. You can purchase pre-cut vegetables that will make the recipe easier. Allowing your loved one to select the vegetables instills a sense of ownership of the project and success!

You may want to go ahead and cut everything, then with your assistance, have your loved one add items to the pan. Your loved one may participate by being a food critic and letting you know how good or bad they think it tastes, or they may just want to

watch you do the cooking, and that is okay too! Observing is an activity that can also be good for the brain!

Cooking allows chefs to use their senses- smell and taste, hearing the food sizzle in the pan, touching the food in the mouth while eating, and seeing the bright colors. Noticing these sensations while being in the kitchen together provides an opportunity to stimulate not only the senses, but the brain! Naming those sensations and discussing the experience can add to the social component of this activity.



Brain Health 101



## Supplies Needed

2 large bowls

1 medium size bowl

1 baking sheet

1 large spoon for mixing

Measuring cups

Measuring spoons

Foil or nonstick cooking spray

Oven mitts



## **Marinade Ingredients**

- ¼ Cup olive oil
- 3 Tablespoons balsamic vinegar
- 1 teaspoon brown sugar
- 1 Tablespoon brown mustard
- 1 teaspoon dried parsley
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- Salt and pepper to taste



## **Vegetable Ingredients**

- ½ bag frozen cauliflower
- ½ bag frozen brussels sprouts
- 1 bag frozen squash

## **Chicken**

- ½ bag frozen chicken tenders, thawed

## **Instructions**

Preheat oven to 400 degrees Fahrenheit.

Mix Your Marinade Ingredients.

Combine all marinade ingredients into medium size mixing bowl.

Prepare Your Vegetables.

Combine all frozen vegetables in a large bowl. Pour half of the marinade over the vegetables. Use a large spoon to mix well.

Prepare Your Chicken. Put thawed chicken in a large bowl.

Pour half of the marinade over the chicken. Use your hands to mix.

Wash and dry your hands.

Spread everything evenly over a lined baking sheet and roast for 20-25 minutes or until vegetables are cooked through and chicken reaches 165F

**Remember, Safety comes first! Always use caution when working with knives or hot burners. Set an alarm to remind yourself of cooking times or to turn off an appliance.**

Wash your hands often, and dry them so as not to slip when using kitchen items. Ask for help when needed.

## **Modifications**

This is an activity with many steps. To modify the activity, you may want to have your loved one assist with parts of the activity, always focusing on what he or she CAN do. If vision or shakiness is a concern, it is probably best that the care partner do the cutting.

A person with dementia can act as the “sous chef,” assisting in the kitchen. For this activity, this role might include opening the bags, emptying the bags of food into the bowl, cleaning the items used for preparation. Helping organize is the role of the sous chef!

This activity usually begins with a trip to the grocery store, and selecting the vegetables. Allowing your loved one to select the vegetables instills a sense of ownership of the project and success!

Your loved one may participate by being a food critic and letting you know how good or bad they think the dish tastes, or they may just want to watch you do the cooking, and that is okay too! Observing is an activity that can also be good for the brain!

Cooking allows chefs to use their senses- smell and taste, touching the food in the mouth while eating, and seeing the bright colors. Noticing these sensations while being in the kitchen together provides an opportunity to stimulate not only the senses, but the brain! Naming those sensations and discussing the experience can add to the social component of this activity.

## Fall Decorations- Banner



Brain Boost



Brain Health 101



### Supplies

You will need a table to set everything on.

brown paper bag

real or artificial leaves

glue stick or tape

scissors

string, fishing line, twine

ruler

### Instructions

Fold the lunch bag in half. Make sure the bottom flap of the bag is folded inside.

Make a diagonal cut against the grain.

This piece will be your template.

Fold the next lunch bag in half. Make sure the bottom flap of the bag is folded inside.

Place the template on top of the bag. Raise to cut.

Repeat to have the desired number of pennant pieces for your banner.

Unfold and put each pennant piece flat on the table with the bottom part of lunch bag closest to table.

Spread glue on the top of one pennant piece.

Spread glue on the back of a leaf.

Turn leaf over, onto the glue on the pennant piece and press down.

Repeat for each pennant piece.

When finished gluing leaves and they have dried, turn all pennant pieces over in a line.

Cut a long piece of string.

Leave a few inches of string at the beginning. This will be used to hang the banner.

Lift the flap of the first pennant piece, and put part of the string under the flap)

Tape the flap down.

Using a ruler, measure about 5 inches between where that pennant piece stops and the next one begins.



Lift the flap of the next pennant piece and insert part of the string under the flap.

Tape the flap down.

Repeat this process until you have done this for all of the pennant pieces, leaving some string at the end.

Now it is ready to display.

## **Modifications**

Your loved one may not be able to do this activity from start to finish, but may be able to assist you with various parts. For example, this craft activity involves leaves. You may want to go for a walk with your loved one and gather a few. While on your walk, notice the things around you. Listen to the crunchy leaves under your feet or the birds singing. You could even sing a song like “Don’t Sit Under the Apple Tree” together.

While making the banner, if your loved one has difficulty with scissors, you could cut the bags and have them do the parts that involve the gluing. When hanging the banner, they may be able to tell you if it is hung evenly or needs to move a little to the right or left.

Each activity we do is made up of several steps. Doing any step is valuable and can boost brain power! Have your loved one do what THEY CAN and what they WANT to do!