

Brain

HEALTH ACTIVITIES



Episode Guide

Spring



Brain Boost



Brain Health 101

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

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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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Modifications

Gardens stimulate the senses! Pause the video at anytime to discuss or ponder the garden tour. You could say or think about things like, “Aren’t those beautiful flowers?” Maybe pause and just look at the flowers.

Take a garden tour in your area. There may be special gardens open for tours. Or you may have plants in your yard, neighborhood, or community park. You may even want to take a trip to a landscaping store. Make sure where you are includes a safe place to walk with no tripping hazards. Make sure to take time to stop and smell the flowers blooming. If the flowers are your own, pick a few and make a bouquet. You could even give the bouquet to a friend.

Another way to expand or extend the garden tour is to view photographs of gardens. You could look at old photographs you have, view images online, or get some books from the library with pictures. Engaging with someone else about your favorites, or most colorful, or your own experiences in the garden can provide meaning. Saying things like, “tilling the soil was a dreadful task, but picking the flowers made it worth it!”





Ingredients

- 2 Tablespoons butter
- 2 Cups fresh peas
- ½ white onion, diced
- 2 large leeks, thinly sliced
- 1 head garlic, roasted
- 4 cups stock or water
- Salt and pepper
- 1 cup cream
- ¼ cup reduced cream or sour cream
- Chives, cut into short sticks

Directions

- Heat the butter in a large saucepan over medium-high heat.
- Add the leeks and onion.
- Sauté for 7 minutes until the onion is translucent.

Add the peas and cook for 3 to 5 minutes.

Add the cloves of roast garlic, then add the stock or water.

Increase the heat to high and bring to a boil.

Turn down to a simmer and cook for an additional 10 minutes.

Make sure to allow the soup to cool.

Then, puree the soup in batches;
place 2 cups of soup in a blender.

Place the lid on top and hold down
with a folded dishtowel.

If the soup is still hot, the steam could
pop the lid off.

Puree on low speed.

Repeat until you have pureed all the
soup. **Be very careful.**

Place pureed soup back into pot over medium heat.

Stir until heated through.

Add cream, salt, pepper.

Serve with a drizzle of cream or sour cream and chives.





Modifications

Making soup can be a cumbersome activity with multiple steps don't hesitate to simplifying the recipe, so you can be most successful.

Cooking allows chefs to use their senses- smell and taste, hearing the soup bubble in the pan, touching the food in the mouth while eating, or feeling the spoon stir, and seeing the bright color of the peas. Noticing these sensations while being in the kitchen can provide 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.

If making the soup seems too difficult, or if you do not have the time to make the soup, you might want to just watch the cooking show and warm up a can of soup to enjoy!

***Be sure to allow the soup to cool before pureeing to prevent burns.**



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Smoothie Ingredients

Yogurt

Mixed Berries (Fresh or Frozen)

Frozen Banana

Honey

Water

Chia Seeds

Blender

Directions

Combine 1 cup yogurt, 1 cup mixed berries, ½ a frozen banana, 1 tablespoon honey, ½ cup water and 1 tablespoon chia seeds in a blender.

Mix until smooth

*add more liquid to make it thinner if you so choose

Modifications

Try different combinations! Different flavor yogurts, different types of frozen fruit. You could try switching milk or fruit juices instead of water. The possibilities are endless!

*If you buy too many bananas and they start to get ripe before you can use them, throw them in a freezer bag and freeze them so that you always have a frozen banana ready when you want to make a smoothie.



Tai Chi in the Park



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Modifications

Tai Chi is a wonderful activity that has many benefits including maintaining flexibility, strength, and balance. If your loved one is having difficulty doing Tai Chi as shown in the video, you may need to modify it. If standing is difficult and poses safety concerns, use a chair. You will continue to reap many of the Tai Chi benefits from sitting down. Also remember that this activity does not have to be done perfectly to be enjoyable. Participate in what feels comfortable. There may be a stretch that feels good and you want to continue that. If the instructions feel like they are too cumbersome, pause the video and continue doing the stretch. You may have more success if you do it together. Having your loved one see you do the stretching may be a visual cue of how the stretch is supposed to be done and they may mimic you. You could also attend a Tai Chi class.