



YALE NATIONAL INITIATIVE

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Curriculum Units by Fellows of the National Initiative
2009 Volume VI: The Brain in Health and Disease

Our Brain's Fat and Carbohydrate Connection

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This unit is designed to integrate student's knowledge about atoms, elements, and compounds into their daily lives. Students will have an opportunity to learn how the brain utilizes specific compounds to develop and function. The goal of the unit is for students to recognize how specific foods in their diet, when they are broken down into chemicals, can enhance or harm the brain. Two food compounds will be the central focus, fats and carbohydrates. These two compounds play a significant role in the brain's function and structural development. Students consume large quantities of these two substances daily; thus the unit will attempt to educate them about which types of fats and carbohydrates can enhance their brain function. Students will have an opportunity to learn how certain fats and carbohydrates affect them personally by participating in a food choice program. The unit will also allow students to organize and present an educational pep rally to the school to share what they have learned.

(Developed for Physical Science, grade 8; recommended for Physical Science, grade 8)

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