

NUTRITION 101: *Choose Life!*

A FAMILY NUTRITION AND HEALTH PROGRAM

THIRD EDITION

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If you have a health-related question or a health challenge, please seek the guidance of the health professional of your choice. Growing Healthy Homes LLC is not able to answer health questions.

Dedicated to all the families who read and implement the healthy living suggestions outlined in *Nutrition 101: Choose Life!* so they may have the physical and emotional health to fulfill God's calling on their lives.

Nutrition 101: Choose Life!

“I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live:”

Deuteronomy 30:19

Introduction

The study of nutrition is more than just a look into food and its nutrients. It is an in-depth look at how we eat, what we eat, how the body works, and how these foods affect the body. This book is not a rehash of biology or science, but a discovery of how the body systems are affected by the foods – good or bad – we eat. Research, recipes, and projects will make *Nutrition 101: Choose Life!* fun for the whole family and establish lifelong habits and desires to eat wholesome foods that support great health. This corroborates III John 2: “Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth.”

The 12 main body systems will be covered in six units.

Unit 1 – The Brain and Nervous System

Unit 2 – The Digestive System

Unit 3 – The Respiratory, Olfactory, Auditory, and Visual Systems

Unit 4 – The Muscular and Skeletal Systems

Unit 5 – The Cardiovascular and Immune Systems

Unit 6 – The Endocrine System & Emotions

If the principles in *Nutrition 101: Choose Life!* are already a part of your family’s lifestyle, use it to enhance your food preparation and meal time experiences. This teaches the whys of eating the way you do. Rather than, “Mom said I can’t have that,” they can say “I choose not to eat that because I know what it does to my body.”

This book was written for you.

“Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.” Proverbs 22:6

There are many textbooks written on the subjects of science and biology, explaining the various body systems and organs, how they work, where they are located, and the jobs they perform. Still more books cover health issues and various theories about longevity.

Every student, whether public, private, or home educated, is required to read and study these subjects. If this is so, then why is disease increasing at an alarming rate in this country? Why are children stricken with cancers today more than



in years past? Why has diabetes risen to near epidemic levels? Why is heart disease, even with advancements in modern medicine, still the number one killer in America and now prevalent in our teenagers? Why, with a myriad of pharmaceutical drugs and state-of-the-art diagnostic tools, are we sicker now than ever before? (See Health Statistics in the United States in Appendix A.)

The American Diabetes Association, the American Heart Association, and the National Institutes of Cancer all state the most important thing we can do to prevent and even *cure* these diseases is...CHANGE THE WAY WE EAT!

If we are listening to these experts, why are we not making progress?

This is precisely why *Nutrition 101: Choose Life!* was created. We, the authors, have a mandate to assist families, especially those with children, to understand the real relationship food has on our “fearfully and wonderfully made” bodies, as referenced in Psalm 139:14.

The Bible gives us clear direction about taking instruction and gaining wisdom. “My people are destroyed for a lack of knowledge,” states Hosea 4:6. So we encourage families to heed the advice of Proverbs 4:13, “Take firm hold of instruction, do not let go; Keep her, for she is your life.”

Would you like to feed your family more nutritiously but have no idea where to start? Have you tried telling your family the importance of eating right, only to slip back into the fast food maze? Do you think the cost of eating nutritiously is out of your budget? Would you like some biblically sound help from real families and expert counsel about real food and real world eating? Do you have solid nutritional habits in your family but want to pass along the “whys” to your children?

That is the purpose of *Nutrition 101: Choose Life!* Written by a team of four mothers, this book is designed for positive, effective, long-term, healthy lifestyle changes.

Is This Even Possible?

Absolutely! Romans 8:28-39 is well known for encouraging believers that they are more than conquerors, but the preceding statement in verses 26 and 27 are less quoted and equally contextual for this book: “In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express. And He who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God’s will.”

Perhaps you have prayed for the answers you will find in this study without even knowing it. When we pray for wisdom and discernment and healing, God loves us and wants to grant our request. When He grants it, He does so knowing that we are fully equipped to receive it.

As you equip your family by implementing the information in this book, you most likely will encounter adversity and be tempted in moments of weakness. The following sections are intended to encourage you in those times and prepare you with ideas for your own proactive action plan.



About the Authors



Debra Starkey, N.D., M.H., C.N.C., I.C.A. (retired naturopath, Master Herbalist, Certified Nutritional Counselor, Internationally Certified Aromatherapist), is a veteran homeschool mother and author and shares from nearly two decades of personal and professional experience in helping families just like yours to regain and maintain optimum health. Assisting thousands of people overcome minor and life threatening illness, Debra knows the importance of proper, body system specific nutrition, and supplementation.

“I know that *Nutrition 101: Choose Life!* will change your life, as the information shared has already proven to change the way people look at food and has given them the health to enjoy life and serve their community, church, and God. Since I cannot personally counsel everyone, this book is a way for me to enter your home and help you be successful in keeping your family feeling their best and ‘be-ing’ in health.”



Sera Johnson, B.Mu., is a wife, homeschool mother of four, grandmother, author, health and wellness educator, and founder of Choosing Healthy Life, Inc. As the self-labeled “Former Fast Food Queen,” she and her husband realized their family’s health was in great jeopardy and sought the Lord for wisdom about what to do. After being introduced to Debra Starkey and learning about better health through eating God’s food, Sera’s family is now healthier than ever and looking forward to living out full, healthy, abundant lives for the Glory of God. Her heart is to share with mothers what she has learned and that it is never too late to teach your family how to eat and love God’s food.



Laura Hopkins, B.S., is a wife, homeschool mother, author, and professional communicator with a decade of experience in the public and private sectors, including a Fortune 8 global energy company. As the co-founders of 7 Oily Days, she and her husband Jonathan encourage thousands to thrive in life with healthy bodies, minds, and spirits. Laura strives to model for her own family that, as children of God, it is crucial to maintain a hunger for His provision and make daily choices that impact abundant living. She loves to share the love of God by feeding others with and teaching others about His food.



Karen Hopkins, B.S., is a wife, mother, grandmother, author, and former Home Economics teacher who developed diabetes at the age of 45 due to S.A.D. (Standard American Diet). Traditional nutrition courses did not prepare her for the onslaught of processed, fast food eating habits and the busy lifestyle of a growing family. Forced to face the reality of a shortened lifespan due to excessively high blood sugar levels, Karen reversed the prognosis in six short months without medication through the use of specific natural supplements, diet, and exercise. She founded Growing Healthy Homes LLC in 2007 to educate and train families about God’s desire for His children to prosper in health even as their souls prosper (III John 2). Today, she and her husband Max operate multiple successful companies and frequently speak around the U.S. and internationally about God’s plan for wellness, purpose, and abundance.

Table of Contents

Introduction	5
About the Authors	7
Getting Started	15
Unit 1 - The Brain and Nervous System	19
Chapter 1 – The Brain	21
What is the Brain?	21
Discussion Questions, Activities, Resources	24
“Power” Recipes and Activities – How to Guide	25
Guacamole	26
Chapter 2 – Brain Health and Nutrition	27
What are Fats?	28
What are Omega Fatty Acids?	30
How to Choose the Right Supplements for Your Brain	32
Discussion Questions, Activities, Resources	35
Greek Salad	36
Chapter 3 – The Nervous System	37
What are Nerves?	37
Discussion Questions, Activities, Resources	40
Potato Salad with Flaxseed Oil – Hold the Mayo	41
Chapter 4 – Nervous System Health and Nutrition	43
What are Amino Acids?	44
B-Complex Vitamins	47
Discussion Questions, Activities, Resources	50
Stuffed Eggs – Hold the Mayo	51
Additional Recipes	52
Unit 2 - The Digestive System	53
Chapter 1 – The Digestive System	55
Discussion Questions, Activities, Resources	60
Fruit Salad	61
Chapter 2 – Digestive Health and Nutrition	63
Acid/Alkaline Balance	66
Water	68
Discussion Questions, Activities, Resources	72
Green Apple Bean Salad	74
Chapter 3 – Enzymes	75
Enzyme Supplementation	78
Discussion Questions, Activities, Resources	80
Quinoa Vegetable Risotto	81

Chapter 4 – Elimination	83
What is Fiber?	84
Refined vs. Whole	85
Got good gut bacteria?	86
Cleansing	87
Probiotic Supplementation	89
Discussion Questions, Activities, Resources	90
Spice Cookies	91
Additional Recipes	92
Unit 3 - The Respiratory, Olfactory, Auditory, and Visual Systems	97
Chapter 1 – The Respiratory System	99
Problems of the Lungs and Respiratory System	103
How does food affect the Respiratory System?	105
Household Toxins	106
Discussion Questions, Activities, Resources	108
No Dairy No Chocolate “Chocolate” Pudding	109
Chapter 2 – The Olfactory System and The Nose	111
How does food affect the Olfactory System?	113
Household and Personal Care Toxins	115
Discussion Questions, Activities, Resources	116
Basil and Garlic Pesto	117
Chapter 3 – The Auditory System and the Ears	119
Supplements for Hearing Support	122
Discussion Questions, Activities, Resources	123
Spinach Salad	124
Chapter 4 – The Visual System and The Eyes	125
Nutrition for Healthy Eyesight	128
Discussion Questions, Activities, Resources	131
Fresh Carrot and Fruit Juice or Smoothie	132
Additional Recipes	133
Unit 4 - The Skeletal and Muscular Systems	137
Chapter 1 – The Skeletal System	139
Health Issues of the Skeletal System	143
What are Minerals?	143
Teeth	146
Fluorine vs. Fluoride	147
Discussion Questions, Activities, Resources	149
Nut Balls	150
Chapter 2 – Joints and The Muscular System	151
The Joints	151
Joint Health Issues	152

How does nutrition affect the joints?	152
The Muscular System	154
Muscular System Health Issues	156
How does nutrition affect the muscular system?	157
What is Protein?	157
Quality Protein	158
Discussion Questions, Activities, Resources	160
Traditional Hummus Dip with Basil	161
Chapter 3 – The Integumentary System – Skin, Hair and Nails	163
What makes up the skin?	163
Nutrition and the Skin	165
Hair	167
Health and Hair – Surviving or Thriving?	167
Nutrition and Hair	168
Nails	169
Discussion Questions, Activities, Resources	170
Cabbage Slaw	171
Chapter 4 – Exercise	173
What are the different types of exercise?	174
How often should we exercise and for how long?	176
Children and Exercise	177
Benefits of Regular Exercise	178
Exercise Safety Tips	178
Fuel for Exercising	178
What are electrolytes?	180
Exercise Tips	181
Discussion Questions, Activities, Resources	182
Chicken Nuggets	183
Additional Recipes	184
Unit 5 - The Cardiovascular and Immune Systems	189
Chapter 1 – The Cardiovascular System	191
Blood Types	194
Discussion Questions, Activities, Resources	196
Heart Healthy Oatmeal with Fruit	197
Chapter 2 – Heart Health and Nutrition	199
Heart Disease	199
Cholesterol	200
Protect the Heart with Good Dental Habits	203
Heart Healthy Diets	204
Blood Health and Nutrition	208
Discussion Questions, Activities, Resources	209
Rice Stuffed Tomatoes	210

Chapter 3 – The Immune System	211
The Lymphatic System	213
Stress	214
Immune-Suppressing Food	214
Antibiotics	215
Vaccines	215
Boosting the Immune System	216
Discussion Questions, Activities, Resources	218
Mixed Berry Salad	219
Chapter 4 – Carbohydrates and Sugar	221
What are carbohydrates?	221
How much of the diet should include carbohydrates?	224
Sugar	225
Sugar and the Immune System	226
Glycemic Index	227
High Fructose Corn Syrup	228
Dangers of Artificial Sweeteners	228
Natural Sugar Substitutes	229
Discussion Questions, Activities, Resources	230
Almond Butter Chip Bars	231
Additional Recipes	232
Unit 6 - The Endocrine System and Emotions	235
Chapter 1 – The Endocrine System	237
What are hormones?	237
What are glands?	238
Discussion Questions, Activities, Resources	243
Ultimate Pizza	244
Chapter 2 – Endocrine Health and Vitamins	247
What are vitamins?	253
Vitamin Supplementation	254
Discussion Questions, Activities, Resources	256
Brussels Sprouts with Lemon Pepper Dressing	257
Chapter 3 – Diabetes	259
Diabetes History	259
Type 1	260
Type 2	261
Microscopic Fungi	262
Gestational Diabetes	263
Risk Factors of Developing Diabetes	264
Diabetes and Carbohydrates	264
The Importance of Fiber	266
Good Food for Diabetics	266

Discussion Questions, Activities, Resources	268
Veggie Linguine with Fresh Tomato Sauce	269
Chapter 4 - Emotions	271
Emotions and the Body	272
Stress and Cancer	275
Emotional Frequency	275
Frequency of Food	276
Can food affect emotions?	276
Emotional Eating and Comfort Food	276
Releasing Emotions and Reclaiming Life	277
Discussion Questions, Activities, Resources	278
Tropical Vanilla Ice Cream Shake	279
Additional Recipes	280
Final Thoughts	284
Activity Guide	285
Unit 1	285
Unit 2	287
Unit 3	290
Unit 4	294
Unit 5	296
Unit 6	300
Appendices	
Appendix A: Health Statistics in the United States	305
Appendix B: <i>Nutrition 101: Choose Life!</i> Food Pyramid	307
<i>Nutrition 101: Choose Life!</i> Food Pyramid Serving Checklist	310
Appendix C: <i>Nutrition 101: Choose Life!</i> Shopping List	311
Mini Alkaline/Acid Food Chart	312
Appendix D: How to Select Fresh Produce	313
Appendix E: Kitchen Safety	321
Appendix F: Vitamin Chart	323
Appendix G: Mineral Chart	327
Appendix H: Alkaline/Acid Chart	331
Appendix I: Nutritional Recommended Daily Allowances (RDA) for Children, Women and Men	333
Appendix J: Fats and Omega Essential Fatty Acids	337
Appendix K: Fiber-Rich Foods	343
Appendix L: Baking with 100% Whole Grains	345
Appendix M: Protein-Rich Plant and Animal Sources	353

Appendix N: Calcium-Rich Foods	355
Appendix O: Milk – The Big Debate	357
Appendix P: Sugar Alternatives – Artificial vs. Natural	361
Appendix Q: Asthma – Taking a Deep Breath	371
Appendix R: Mold	375
Appendix S: Labels and Household Toxins	377
Appendix T: Are Toxins in Your Personal Care Products?	385
Appendix U: Nail Health Guide	389
Appendix V: Reproductive Health	393
Appendix W: Cancer	397
Appendix X: Sleep	401
Appendix Y: Microwaves	403
Appendix Z: Cadmium – A Silent Culprit	405
Appendix AA: Spices for Good Health	409
Appendix BB: <i>Nutrition 101: Choose Life!</i> Top Foods	413
Appendix CC: How to Choose an Enzyme Supplement	423
Appendix DD: Choosing Nutritional Supplements	425
Appendix EE: Healthy Home Resources	429

Index

431

Getting Started

The information in *Nutrition 101: Choose Life!* can be utilized daily by all families whether as a curriculum or during meal planning and food preparation. It also can be used in homeschool co-ops, private schools, church groups, family home groups, and extracurricular clubs, like the Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts. Multiple users licenses and permission to print more than one copy of the program can be obtained from the publisher by e-mailing orders@growinghealthyhomes.com.

Nutrition 101: Choose Life! is a unit study that encompasses all ages from toddlers to adults. It covers a wide variety of subjects like science, anatomy, biology, nutrition, and health, and can be implemented in a daily or weekly schedule. Use grocery shopping, meal preparation, and meal time as opportunities to incorporate this information to allow children to learn as they live. This should be an organic process that makes healthy choices second-nature.

Some of the material throughout the study may be too in-depth for some children. In such cases, parents should read through the material in each chapter, highlight the important parts with the children, and enforce these simple facts through the activities.

Chapters are structured to be completed in a week. However, feel free to add an extra week for the longer, more in-depth chapters. It is fine to focus on a particular chapter if your family enjoys that topic or wants to do extra activities. All six units were designed to be completed in a year. Because there are so many activities, the entire program can be repeated and modified each year to reinforce or refresh what already has been learned.

Each unit contains:

Chapters – Each one includes information about body systems or how food affects them.

 **Discussion Questions** Try to answer these questions with the whole family. See how answers vary from children to adults.

 **Activities** Pick and choose...or do them all. Extend the time spent in the chapter to finish activities or save them for next year as reinforcement. The activities are structured to allow children to progress as they mature.

 **Additional Resources** These are optional and can be a great way to dive deeper into learning, especially if a family member takes a particular interest in something.

“Power” Recipes and Additional Recipes Use the “Power” Recipe to enhance the topics covered in the chapter and incorporate the additional recipes throughout the course of the unit.

Activity Guide Located before the Appendix, this is an answer key for all activities.

Appendix This contains charts, tables, and articles that elaborate on the text and give direction for some of the discussion and activities.

Here is an example of how to implement a chapter in a week:

Monday – Read over the chapter and the “Discussion Questions” and choose from the “Activities”.

Tuesday – Review chapter highlights and shop for or collect ingredients for the “Power” Recipe.

Wednesday – Prepare the “Power” Recipe for snack or meal time.

Thursday – Choose activities from the “Power” Recipe.

Friday – Share highlights from the week during family meal time.

As your family progresses through *Nutrition 101: Choose Life!*, we want each person to be encouraged to take responsibility for his or her health. With a plethora of recipes, activities, and resources for independent study, every member of the family can get involved and understand how food affects the human body. Now is the best time to start making the necessary changes to the family diet that will have long-term, positive, and habit-forming benefits.

What About Picky Eaters?

Co-author Sera Johnson is the self-proclaimed “Former Fast Food Queen.” She dealt with the struggles of introducing completely new foods and a new healthy lifestyle to her family. Over the past several years, it was not easy, but her family is eating healthier than ever and has made huge strides toward better health. People ask her all the time, “How did you do it? My child is so picky! They will NEVER eat healthy food!” Here are Sera’s suggestions in her own words.

“I had the princess of picky eaters! My oldest daughter, Julia, only ate three kinds of food at home – boxed mac and cheese, frozen personal size pizzas, and ramen noodles – all of which I introduced to her and to which I allowed her to become addicted. Yes, addicted. The only other food she would eat were chicken nuggets from only two particular fast food restaurants and none others. If I ever attempted to offer her a vegetable at dinner and ask her to take one bite, we were in for several hours of agony for the whole family. The Lord opened my eyes and showed me that several of my children were already headed down a path to destruction in their health. I learned that my responsibility to my family included their health and helping them establish long-term healthy eating habits. I knew I had to make drastic changes! Here are some of the initial things I did to help us get on the right track:

- 1. Get rid of the junk!** I immediately got rid of all the processed food and junk food in my house. I knew that it would be better if those choices were completely taken out of the picture.
- 2. Make a list.** Then, I sat down with each of my children, and we wrote down all the vegetables, fruits, grains, and healthy proteins that they liked. At first the list was very short, especially for Julia, but it was a start. We focused on what she did like – broccoli, apples, grapes, and oranges.
- 3. Eat the healthy foods you do like.** For the next several days and even weeks, we ate lots of broccoli, apples, grapes, and oranges. Julia did get very upset that her normal choices were no longer available, but I knew that she would at least eat the things she did like and would probably eat just about anything if she got hungry enough. I knew she wouldn’t starve.
- 4. Make positive confessions.** At mealtime, I had Julia pray aloud with me, ‘Lord, thank you for this good food You made and thank you for helping me to love Your food.’ At first, she didn’t believe her own words, but the more we prayed and the more she spoke those positive words out of her own mouth, the more it helped her in trying new foods and opening up her heart to what God had provided for her to eat for her health.
- 5. Try at least one new thing at each meal.** Statistics say that if a child doesn’t like a new food at first, trying it again at least 10 more times in a row will help him or her develop a taste for it. The more new foods Julia tried, the more she realized she did, in fact, like. She didn’t like everything and still doesn’t, but she started developing a confidence in at least trying new foods. After a while, she took pride in her ever-growing list of good food. Children will pick up on your language and facial expressions, so parents should be



train your brain

leaders in trying foods on their not-so-favorite list. This curriculum will guide you in healthy ways to make some foods more palatable.

6. Find healthy alternatives to those old favorites. Although Julia didn't like them as much at first, I found and created healthier, homemade versions of those old foods she once loved. The chicken nugget recipe featured in Unit 4 helped take the place of the fast food version and is now a beloved family favorite, even for Julia. We now make homemade pizza with freshly made crust and sauce, which the children help make and tout as being the 'best ever made.'

The next steps were to work on me. Although I do like just about every kind of food, my challenge was changing my mindset that I was just too busy to cook. When I did find the time, I didn't know what to cook. That is where I asked the Lord to help me change my thinking, help me to prioritize my life to find time to plan some meals, and basically teach me about what my family needed to eat for their health. I felt like I was at ground zero and had so much to learn and so much to unlearn, but the Lord led me to some great resources that included my mother, Karen Hopkins, and my friend, Debra Starkey. I truly wish I had *Nutrition 101: Choose Life!* back then! It would have made things easier and a lot more fun! However, we have come a long way and are still a work in progress. My family is healthier than ever, and I give God all the glory for it. I hope you can learn from my experiences and be encouraged that change can happen!"

Let's Get Started ...

By the time your family completes this book and implements new food choices and strategies, you may be surprised by the improvements you may begin to experience. Some families may choose to keep a journal or photo essay of their journey. We pray God's blessings on your family as you learn to love His food and respect your bodies as He has created them to function. May this Scripture encourage you, "Who satisfies thy mouth with good things, so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's." Psalm 103:5.

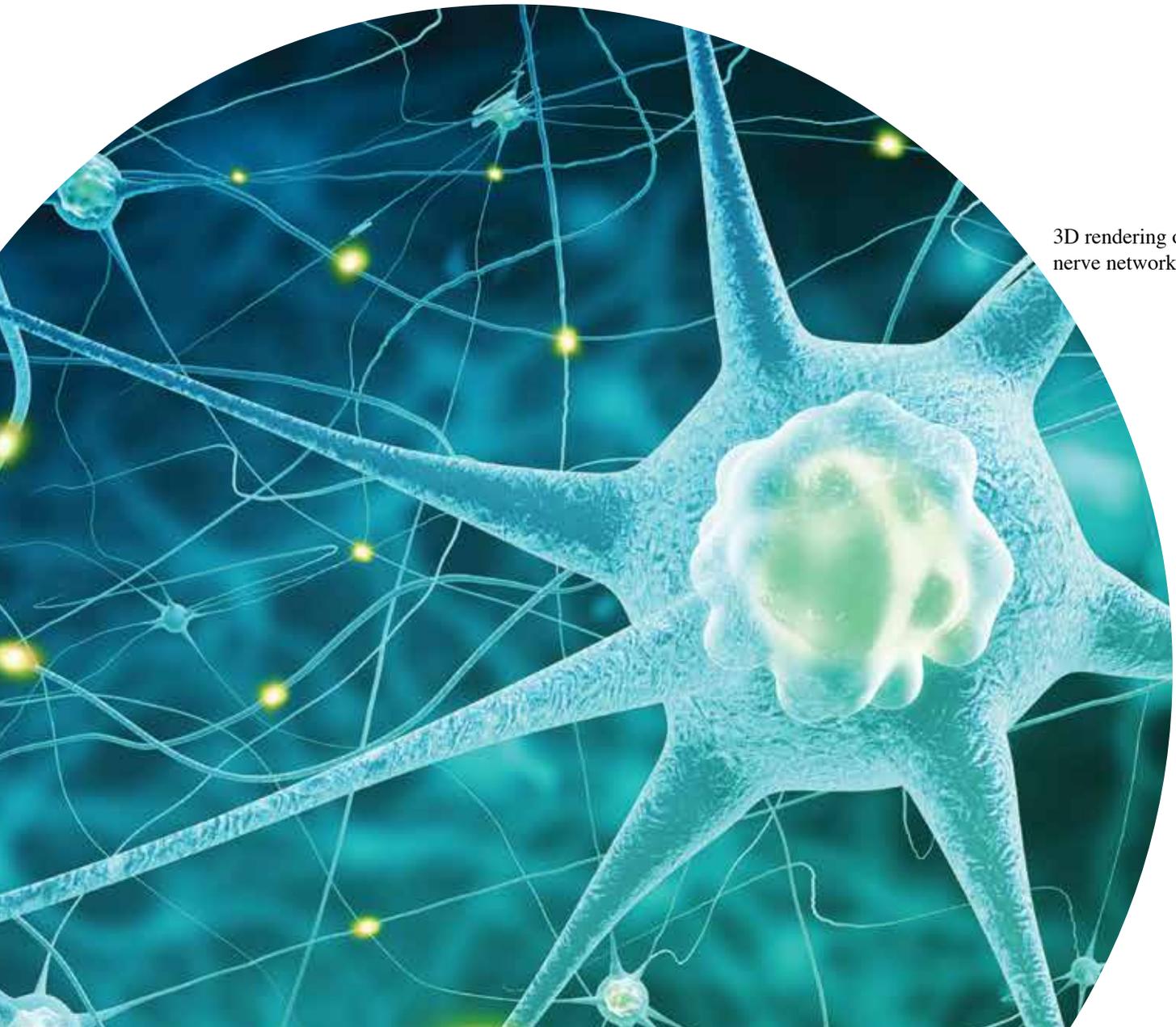


Unit I

The Brain and Nervous System

Without our brains and nervous systems, we would not be alive. The brain and nervous system are our control centers for everything – thinking, learning, walking, talking, breathing, and more. They tell our heart to beat and our muscles to contract when we want to run. They tell us to quickly move our hands away if we have touched something hot. Psalm 139:14 declares, “I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well.” God made our brains and nervous systems to do some amazing things! However, they cannot do those things alone.

We all need good air to breathe, good water to drink, and good food to eat. Along with exercise and proper sleep, the food we put into our body affects how well it functions. This is especially true for the brain and nervous system. Not all food is the same; some foods help us, and other foods hurt us. As good stewards of the bodies God has given us, we need to learn how our bodies work and how food affects them. This knowledge will allow us to make wise choices about what to eat, and in turn we can have long, healthy, abundant lives.



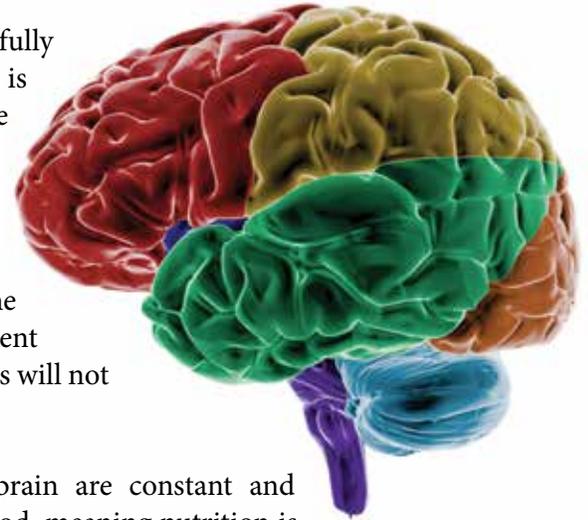
3D rendering of a nerve network

Unit I Chapter I

The Brain

“Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus.” Philippians 2:5

Our brain is so amazing and complex that experts don't even fully understand how it works. However, they agree that good nutrition is key to healthy brain development. This process begins at about three weeks after conception as a baby develops in his mother's womb and is dependent upon her diet. Fats (Omega-3, Omega-6, and Omega-9), protein, complex carbohydrates, vitamins, minerals, and water are crucial for proper brain development. If nutrients are scarce for the developing baby, then his or her brain will receive them at the expense of the other organs. Some part of the baby's brain development will be curtailed, some structures will go unbuilt, and some functions will not be performed if proper nutrition is not available.



FUN FACT

At only 31 days post conception, the brain of a developing baby is already forming. The very first of over 100 billion neurons is being formed.

In 1998, a team of American and Swedish scientists demonstrated for the first time that new brain cells are generated in the hippocampus (memory and learning area) of adult humans ages 55 to 70. (November 1998, Nature Medicine)

The nutrient requirements of the brain are constant and continue all the way through adulthood, meaning nutrition is vital for a healthy brain no matter a person's age. To fully understand the needs of this fascinating organ and how nutrition affects it, we must first know more about the structure and function of the brain.

What is the Brain?

Weighing about three pounds in the average adult, the brain is part of the nervous system. It has been likened to a computer with its many functions. However, no computer – not even a super computer – has ever come close to matching the human brain's capabilities. The brain is the site of thinking and the control center for the rest of the body. The brain coordinates our ability to move, walk, jump, run, touch, smell, hear, speak, and see. It allows us to understand and to perform functions such as adding and subtracting, thinking ahead, reasoning, and even daydreaming. The brain receives input – what we hear, see, touch, smell, and taste – analyzes the input and then responds. The brain also adjusts to emotions and mood.

The brain of both babies and adults is estimated to have about 10 trillion cells! One hundred billion of these cells are called neurons. The neurons act as on and off switches, similar in function to light switches and produce chemicals that trigger other neurons. Different neurons require and use different types of chemicals. These chemicals are called neurotransmitters or messengers and are given names like epinephrine, norepinephrine, or dopamine.

WORD POWER

Cognitive

Pronunciation: \käg-nə-tiv\

Function: adjective

Date: 1586

- 1: of, relating to, being, or involving conscious intellectual activity (as thinking, reasoning, or remembering)
 - <cognitive impairment>
 - 2: based on or capable of being reduced to empirical factual knowledge
- cog·ni·tive·ly adverb

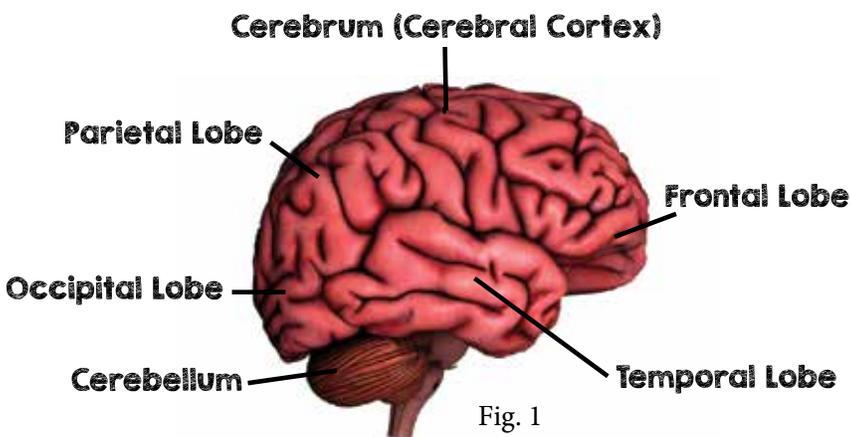
The brain needs a constant stream of nourishment and oxygen. About 20 percent of our oxygen-rich blood continuously flows from the heart to the brain. A loss of blood flow to the brain for more than 10 seconds can lead to a loss of consciousness. Abnormally low blood levels or high levels of a toxic substance can cause the brain to malfunction within seconds, but thankfully God has created within the brain a built-in mechanism called the blood-brain barrier (BBB) to keep most toxins from causing severe damage. It is important to note that the BBB was made to protect us from unknown harmful toxins and should not be used as an excuse to expose ourselves to known toxins.

What are the parts of the brain and what do they do?

The brain has three main components: the cerebellum, cerebrum, and brain stem.

The **cerebellum** (Fig. 1) is the bottom part of the brain. It controls balance and coordination and helps the body make smooth, precise movements when reaching, throwing, walking, turning, and bending.

The **cerebrum** or cerebral cortex is the top and largest portion of the brain. It is divided into two halves: the right hemisphere, or right brain, and the left hemisphere, or left brain. The right hemisphere of the brain deals with visual activities and plays a role in identification. It takes visual information, puts it together, and says, "That is a dog." The left hemisphere is the analytical portion. It manages details, analyzes information collected by the right brain and applies critical thinking to it. The right hemisphere sees a dog, but the left hemisphere says, "I know whose dog that is." The cerebral hemispheres account for 85 percent of the brain's weight and are further divided into four lobes.



The **frontal lobe** is involved in motor function, speech, thoughts, planning, and mood. In most people, the left frontal lobe controls language-related movement, while the right frontal lobe controls non-verbal skills. The frontal lobe is also where we process organizational skills and the completion of simple tasks. If this area of the brain is damaged or undernourished a person may become less motivated or lethargic and may struggle just to get out of bed. The frontal lobe also has a role in behavior and prevents people from

saying things that may be threatening, inappropriate, or bizarre. Damage to the frontal lobe may result in people doing things that are completely out of character, like swearing, undressing, or urinating in public and other inappropriate behavior.

The **parietal lobe** interprets sensory data input from the rest of the body. It has an important role in dealing with our senses. In most people, the left side of the parietal lobe is considered dominant because of the way it helps us to do everyday tasks such as reading, writing, making calculations, and speaking. Areas within the parietal lobe on the non-dominant side of the brain, the right side, control spatial orientation. From these areas, we derive our ability to know where we are in space, and we know how to find our way from one place to another. Damage to the non-dominant parietal hemisphere may result in the inability to read maps and the loss of the ability to stay oriented even in familiar places. A peculiar condition called spatial neglect causes victims of parietal damage to ignore one half of the environment. They may neglect to shave one half the face, eat portions on one half of the dinner plate only, or ignore people conversing standing or sitting on one side of the body but not the other.

The **occipital lobe** processes our vision. While it is the eyes that see objects, it is the occipital lobe that makes sense of what we are seeing. Damage to this lobe may lead to loss of vision or the inability to fully comprehend what is being seen.

The **temporal lobe** generates emotions and memory. It allows us to recognize objects and people, process short- and long-term memory, and initiate communication. Because of the temporal lobe, we can remember where we left a book or recall details from last year's picnic.

At the base of the cerebrum lie a collection of nerve cells called the basal ganglia, thalamus, and hypothalamus. See Figure 2 below.

The **basal ganglia** help to smooth out movement.

The **thalamus** organizes sensory data messages to and from the highest level of the brain, the cerebrum.

The **hypothalamus** lies under the thalamus and coordinates the more automatic functions of the body like sleep, temperature, and water balance. It issues instructions to correct any imbalances, including hormone irregularity.

The **limbic system** links the brain stem with the higher reasoning elements of the cerebral cortex. It controls emotions and instinctive behavior. This also is where the sense of smell is located.

The **hippocampus** is important for learning and short-term memory. This part of the brain is the site where short-term memories are converted into long-term memories for storage in other brain areas.

The **brain stem** lies at the base of the brain near the top of the neck. Even though it is the smallest segment of the brain, it is critical to our survival. It connects the brain and spinal cord. All information to and from the body passes through the brain stem. It controls our heart rate, blood pressure, breathing, and sense of balance. Sleeping and daydreaming are also functions controlled by the brain stem.

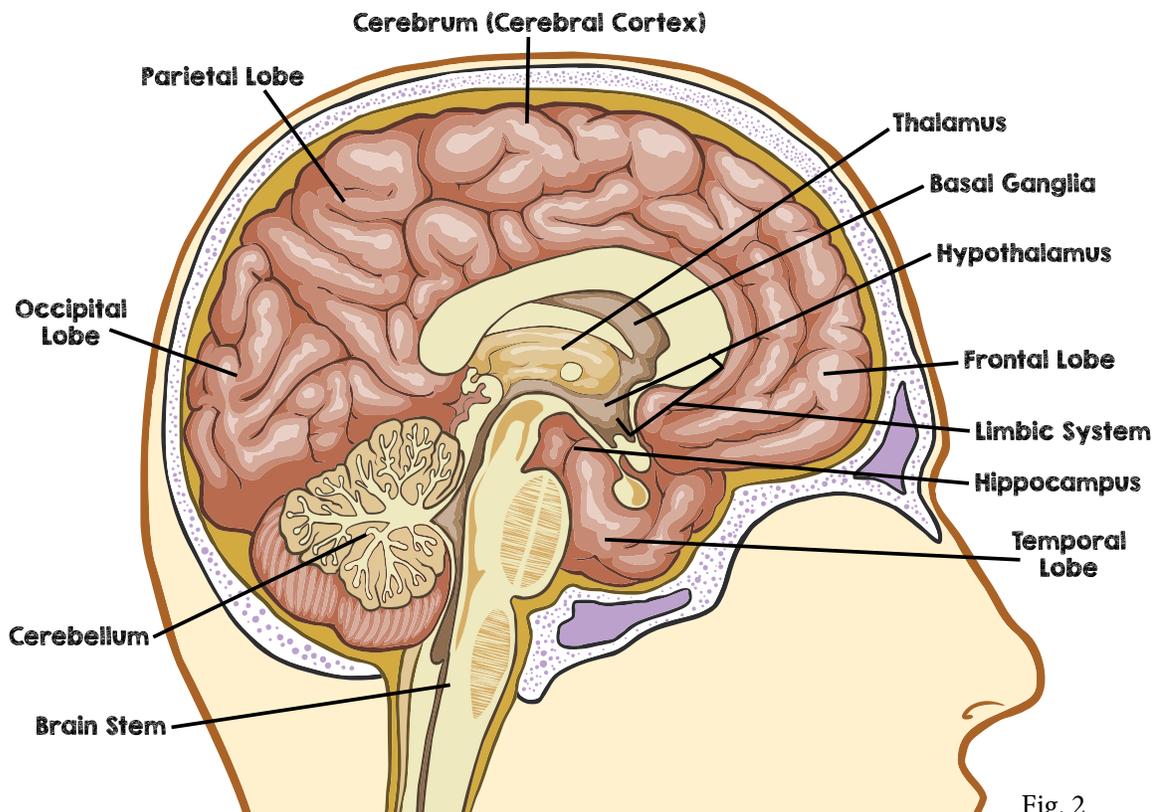


Fig. 2

Unit I Chapter I



Discussion Questions

1. What does it mean to be “fearfully and wonderfully made”?
2. What other scripture references support what we’ve learned about the brain?
3. How does a healthy brain make a healthy body? How healthy is your brain?
4. Why is it so important to wear your helmet while bicycling or roller blading?
5. How is your brain like a computer? How is your brain better than a computer?
6. Do you think playing video games exercises your brain? Why or why not?



Activities - plus the Guacamole “Power” Recipe and activities

Elementary

1. In the morning, brush your teeth with your non-dominant hand. At night, brush your teeth with your dominant hand. Was this hard or easy? Why? Try to use your non-dominant hand at other tasks, such as eating and writing.
2. Using the game 20 Questions as a framework, families can use their own memories to stimulate the brain and have fun. Have one family member recall a family memory and let others ask questions and guess. In addition to recollecting good memories, younger family members get to hear stories they may not remember first hand. It also may help clarify memories with details that others may have forgotten.
3. One family member should collect five household items that are used or known by every family member. Try to find objects that stimulate all of the senses, except sight. Using a blindfold, the other family members should take turns identifying the objects.
4. Find and memorize three scriptures associated with the mind.
5. Play the game Memory.

Secondary

Choose any from above plus

1. Take the following learning style quiz (or find your own) to help you understand your style and how those around you learn: <http://www.educationplanner.org/students/self-assessments/learning-styles-quiz.shtml>
2. Research the word lobe. From which language was it derived?
3. What are the careers specifically focused on the brain or the study of the brain?
4. Read the following article by neuroscientist Dr. David DeWitt: <http://creation.com/david-dewitt-interview-brain-scientist>. Do you believe the composition of the brain supports intelligent design? Why?



Additional Resources

Websites:

1. *Neuroscience for Kids* is produced by Eric Chudler, Ph.D., Director of Education and Outreach at the University of Washington Engineered Biomaterials. (<http://faculty.washington.edu/chudler/neurok.html>).
2. *BrainBashers™* provides brain teasers for older children by Englishman Kevin Stone. (<http://www.brainbashers.com/index.asp>).
3. *BrainPOP®* creates animated, curriculum-based content that engages students, supports educators, and bolsters achievement. Subscription is required for some videos. Not all of the material supports a Christian worldview. (<http://www.brainpop.com/>).

Books:

1. Lawrence, K., and R. Manning. *Keep Your Brain Alive*. New York: Workman Publishing Inc. 1999.
2. Gibson, K., K. Hanson, and T. Mitchell. *Unlock the Einstein Inside: Applying New Brain Science to Wake Up the Smart in Your Child*. Colorado Springs, Colorado: LearningRx. 2007.

“Power” Recipes and Activities

Proverbs 9:10 says “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy is understanding.” It is very important to learn how our bodies work and how food affects them; it is even more important to apply that knowledge. The best way to do that is to get in the kitchen!

This may be the most popular portion of *Nutrition 101: Choose Life!*

The following **“Power” Recipe** and the subsequent “Power” Recipes following each chapter are accompanied by engaging and exciting activities that will enhance the learning experience beyond the recipes. Start by reading about the basic food groups as defined in the *Nutrition 101: Choose Life!* Food Pyramid in Appendix B. Then, prepare the “Power” recipe from the week’s corresponding chapter. Feel free to make any of the other recipes in the Additional Recipes section. Another option is to pick out some of your favorite family recipes and see how you can incorporate any of the good brain or nervous system foods from the lists in the previous chapters or how you can make healthier substitutions for some of the ingredients specific to your family’s needs.

This will help you equip your children with incredibly valuable tools such as planning a meal, selecting fresh produce (see Appendix D), following a recipe, and preparing a meal. Then the entire family can enjoy the fruits and vegetables of your collective labor.

1. Study the *Nutrition 101: Choose Life!* Food Pyramid (Appendix B).
2. Pick out one of the “Power” Recipes with activities.
3. Use “How to Select Fresh Produce” (Appendix D) and the “*Nutrition 101: Choose Life!* Shopping List” (Appendix C) when shopping for your ingredients. Buy **organic** and local when possible. See Appendix D to find out more about organic and local food.
4. Read through “Kitchen Safety” (Appendix E).
5. Get in the kitchen!
6. Discuss the body and good foods for the body while preparing the meal! Emphasize and reinforce the things learned in that week’s chapter. Meal preparation and/or meal times are great opportunities to review the discussion questions from the chapter. Talk about how each ingredient is beneficial. Point out skills used to complete a recipe once the ingredients are gathered. This includes knowing kitchen materials/tools, reading, comprehending, counting, measuring, telling time, and appropriate portions for all family members.
7. Pick and choose from the listed activities that go along with the recipes.
8. Enjoying your time cooking? Choose more recipes to make from the Additional Recipes section.
9. Pick favorite family recipes, incorporate good body system supporting foods, and make healthy substitutions where necessary.
10. Make up your own recipes from the good foods lists.
11. Have fun!



Brain Power

Avocados

Did you know that avocados are fruit and NOT vegetables? Avocados are a source of good, Brain Power fat!

Guacamole

- 4 - 5 ripe avocados
- 2 Tbs. fresh cilantro, finely chopped
- 2 Tbs. onion, finely chopped
- 1/2 cup tomato, finely chopped
- Juice of one small lemon
- 1 clove garlic or 1/2 tsp. minced garlic
- Salt and pepper to taste

Peel and scoop out the flesh of the avocado into a bowl and mash with a fork. Add remaining ingredients and stir. Serve with fresh veggies and/or baked whole grain pita chips or crackers of your choice. Makes eight servings.



Activities

Elementary

1. At the grocery store, learn how to pick out fresh, ripe and ready-to-eat produce for the recipe. Refer to Appendix D.
2. Help make the guacamole by measuring and adding the ingredients while learning or reviewing fractions.
3. Experiment to find out how to make avocados ripen faster with some unripened avocados, an apple, and a small paper bag. Compare the process with a regular avocado sitting by itself next to the bag. Is there a difference? Give your findings in an oral or written report.
4. Grow an avocado plant.

Secondary

Choose any from above plus

1. Why and how does activity #3 above work? Give your findings in an oral or written report.
2. Use a banana rather than an avocado in the experiment and see if it changes your results and why. Give your findings in an oral or written report.
3. Calculate how many grams of fat are in one serving of the guacamole above.
4. Find out what kind of fat is an avocado.