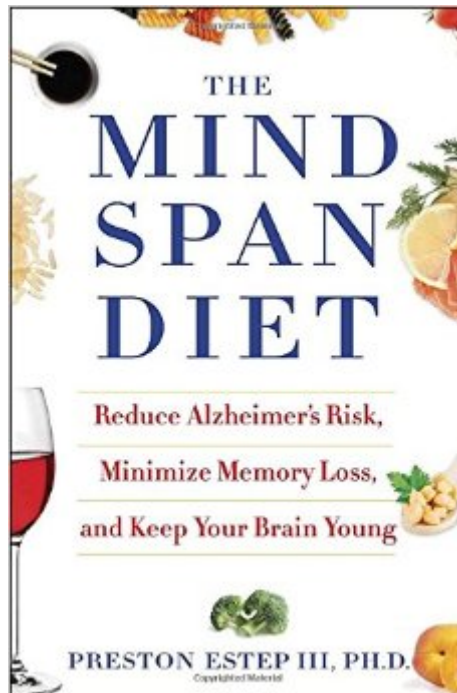


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# The Mindspan Diet: Reduce Alzheimer's Risk, Minimize Memory Loss, And Keep Your Brain Young



## Synopsis

From an esteemed geneticist and the director of gerontology at the Personal Genome Project at Harvard Medical School comes a revolutionary plan for curbing memory loss and improving cognitive longevity that will forever change how you think about diet and aging. All around the world people are living longer than ever, but record numbers of us are experiencing cognitive decline and other brain disorders later in life. New studies show that Alzheimer's disease is the number three cause of death in developed countries, behind heart disease and cancer. But there is good news: We now have the knowledge to extend both lifespan and mindspan, helping to ensure that our minds and bodies stay in peak form at any age. Studying the diets of the "Mindspan Elite"—those populations that live longest with low levels of dementia—as well as the ways that certain food additives and ingredients interact with our genes, Dr. Preston Estep explains how the recent slew of popular brains-and-aging books have steered us down the wrong dietary path. Shattering myths about which foods are (and are not) beneficial to our brains, The Mindspan Diet reveals a simple plan to slow cognitive decline. Startling in its revelations about healthy eating for those over the age of forty, it challenges us to rethink our approach to many common staples, including:

- Iron: While iron-fortified foods sound healthy, high iron intake can be toxic, especially for people over forty, and increases the risk of type 2 diabetes, Alzheimer's, and Parkinson's disease.
- Whole grains: Processed grains such as white rice, pasta, and flour are actually staples in the diets of cultures with the best cognitive health.
- Protein: Though it's considered by some to be a miracle macronutrient, high levels of protein are actually hard on the kidneys, and may promote cancer and accelerate the progression of dementia.

Complete with food recommendations, shopping lists, advice on reading nutrition labels, and more than seventy delicious recipes, The Mindspan Diet shows that you can enjoy the richest flavors life has to offer and remain lean, healthy, and cognitively intact for a very long life. Praise for The Mindspan Diet: "Eye-opening . . . fascinating, important . . . Estep includes plenty of practical info on improving one's mindspan and puts some refined grains back on the table." Publishers Weekly (starred review) "Presenting a sensible regimen that people can follow easily, this recommended diet book [has] useful information about aging." Library Journal "Dr. Estep exposes common misconceptions and well-intentioned but misguided advice on aging and diet. Rigorously researched, this book is also full of tasty tips—illuminating not just a set of rules to follow as blindly as the last set, but how you can apply scientific methods to assess these and other important issues in our increasingly technical world." George M. Church, Ph.D., Robert Winthrop Professor of Genetics and Professor of Health Sciences and Technology, Harvard Medical School "This gem

of a book offers a practical road map for maximizing vibrant cognitive functioning throughout life. We come away convinced that a longer and better life is as close as our own kitchen cupboards. And the Chickpea and Fava Bean Tapenade is to not die for! "Ronald C. Kessler, Ph.D., McNeil Family Professor of Health Care Policy, Harvard Medical School a fascinating guide to modifying your diet to prolong the longevity of your brain as well as your health." Dr. Tim Spector, author of The Diet Myth

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This is an important book. It's main assertion is that iron-fortification of grains combined with American preferences for meat lead to iron levels for older adults that are well above what is needed and that can prove toxic in several respects. (The author is most interested in the adverse impacts on brain function). Though there has been a bit of similar thinking in Germany and to a lesser extent in the United States, this remains a very contrarian view and most food "experts" seem to believe the more iron, the better. Being contrarian does not mean that Estep is correct. But I have checked the numbers, and his case that the vast majority of adults are getting much more iron than needed appears irrefutable. I don't understand chemistry as well as statistics, so cannot attest to the claim of toxic effects. Still, the circumstantial evidence seems strong that decreasing iron consumption would contribute to better brain health. Estep's conclusions are based on populations around the world known for their longevity and brain health, as well as his understanding of human evolution as a leading expert on the human genome. That's certainly enough for me to check labels

more carefully and reduce iron intake.

A richly researched, scientific guide to cognitive health. Dr. Estep is a hard-core scientist, and this book presents the results of years of research done not only by him, but by researchers worldwide in the fields of genetics, molecular biology, dietary science, and mental health. Therefore it's only natural that in many cases it presents conclusions that clash with the conventional wisdom based on conjecture, folklore, and gossipy anecdotes. It could be one of the most important books you'll read in your lifetime, if you listen carefully and absorb its messages. For many readers it can be a turning point in life; and we may hope that this book, the first of its kind, may be a turning point in the popular presentation of scientific knowledge about diet and health.

This book carefully and scientifically analyzes the relationship between diet, longevity, and dementia. Since dementia is a better measure of health than longevity alone, this book focuses on longevity without dementia, or "Mindspan" maximizing the quality years of life. In addition, dementia is probably the #1 killer, not #6 as stated by the CDC. While we have been bombarded with conflicting statements about diet and health, many of these are misconceptions or ideas that are not backed up by strong scientific evidence. This book dissects these ideas and refutes many long-held beliefs, such as the idea that whole grains are necessarily better than refined grains. This book analyzes the diets of long-lived Japanese and Mediterranean people and shows that the base of their food pyramids is actually refined carbs, not whole grains. In particular, this book makes a fascinating argument for the idea that excess iron could be responsible for many of the health problems affecting our society today, including dementia. I believe this book will lead to a deeper examination and further scientific study of this very important idea which could have huge impact, given that most grains consumed by Americans are iron-fortified. Throughout this book, Estep shows his reasoning and deductive process, and explains the evidence leading to his conclusions, with simple and clear writing style. I found this book fascinating to read, and this book has changed how I think about diet.

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