

AGING

I could have sworn my husband and I were baby-boomers. After all I've been told for decades that I belonged to this elite group of 79 million individuals who were products of soldiers returning home. Last week we had our taxes done and discovered that now, amidst all the other changes going on in the financial world, we are no longer the boomer generation. Now we are the sandwich generation. Does that mean we are sandwiches? Regardless of what we're called I have clients who are worried about declining mental acuity.

Because of the large number of us, the science community spends a large amount of time and money researching the aging process and what we can do to keep us thinking clearly. One nutrient you must have in abundance is B12. Part of the B powerhouse family, B12 produces DNA, builds red blood cells and reduces levels of homocysteine (an amino acid linked to higher risk of heart disease).

A recent five-year study of sixty year olds confirmed that folks with low B12 were three to six times more likely to have brain atrophy—a shrinking of the brain and decreased mental functioning. The government recommends 2.4 mcg daily; but herbalists don't usually agree with the government! For disease prevention and health maintenance you need at least 25 mcg. And, if you are over 50 or if you have acid reflux increase your dosage to 500-800 mcg. Don't worry, you would have to take over a 1000 mcg to get too much. If you are a vegetarian, you may need to take a B12 supplement.

Your DIET should contain B12 rich foods and one of my favorite is the good ol' egg. Not just any egg mind you, but free-range eggs. A study conducted by Mother Earth News using four free range flocks (try saying that five times fast) compared to supermarket caged hens showed the farm eggs contained half as much cholesterol, had twice as much vitamin E and six times richer in beta carotene (vitamin A). The free-range eggs also averaged four times more essential omega-3 fatty acids and 100% more folic acid than corporate factory eggs. Studies from Greece, Britain, and Pennsylvania State University concur with Mother Earth, fresh, farm, free-range eggs are more nutritionally potent than cage eggs.

- Clams, canned (3 ounces) 84 mcg
- Liver, calf's, pan-fried (3 ounces) 70 mcg
- Oysters, raw (6 medium) 16 mcg
- Salmon, canned (3 ounces) 4 mcg
- Tuna, light, canned in water (3 ounces) 2.5 mcg
- Nutritional yeast (2 teaspoons) 2.5 mcg
- Ground beef, 85% lean (3 ounces) 2 mcg
- Lamb, loin chop (3 ounces) 2 mcg
- Yogurt, plain, low-fat (8 ounces) 1.3 mcg
- Cottage cheese, 2% milk fat (1/2 cup) 0.8 mcg