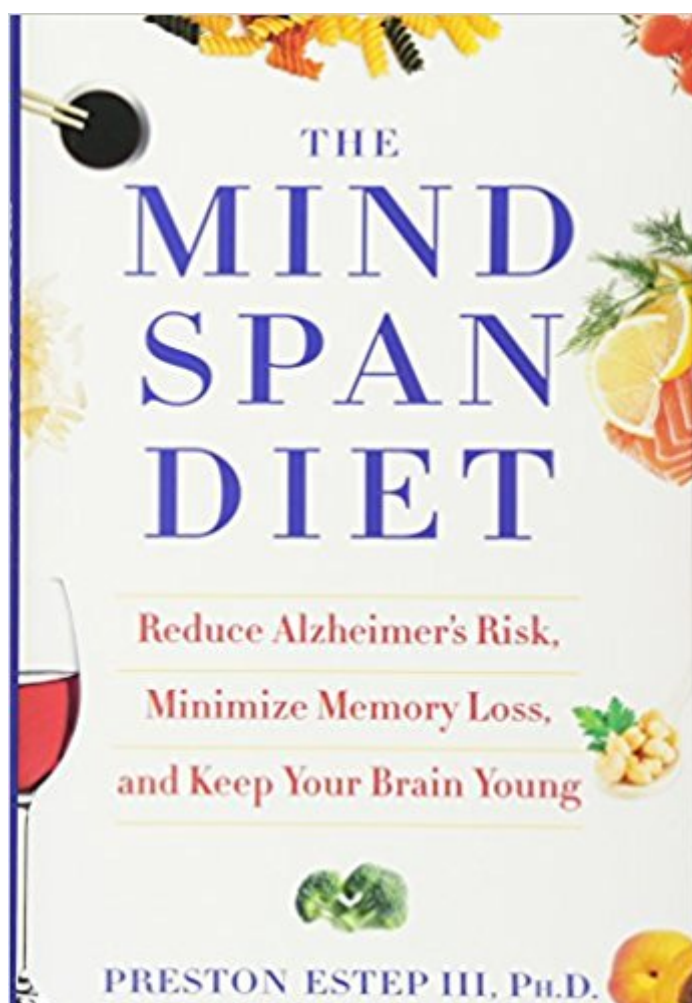


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# The Mindspan Diet: Reduce Alzheimer's Risk, Minimize Memory Loss, And Keep Your Brain Young



## 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

— “Eye-opening . . . fascinating, important . . . [Dr. Preston Estep] examines populations who have both long lives and long mindspans — which he calls the — elite — using the latest information on metabolism and genetics to understand their dietary secrets. Most surprising is his assertion that after age forty, iron, dairy, and whole grains can be harmful to metabolism and contribute to diseases associated with aging, including dementia. . . . 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. You owe it to your family, friends, and personal curiosity to digest and share this amazing feast of ideas.

– 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

“Founded on rigorous scientific evidence and up-to-date research, The Mindspan Diet debunks myths and misinformation that have become widespread among nutritional experts. It provides a few simple changes that we can all incorporate to give ourselves the best opportunity for longer, healthier, and more fulfilling lives.”

– Matt Kaeberlein, Ph.D., Professor of Pathology and founding director of the Healthy Aging and Longevity Research Institute at the University of Washington

“Compelling and provocative, this book details dietary choices that will maximize your chances of having a long mindspan.”

– Brian Kennedy, Ph.D., president and CEO, Buck Institute for Research on Aging

“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*

Preston Estep III, Ph.D., received his doctorate in genetics from Harvard Medical School. He is the director of gerontology at the Harvard Personal Genome Project, and he manages the project’s genome sequencing pipeline. A co-founder and adviser to multiple biomedical start-ups and nonprofit organizations, Dr. Estep is a founder and the chief scientific officer of Veritas Genetics, and the chairman of the Mind First Foundation, a mental health nonprofit that he established with professors at Harvard Medical School. Dr. Estep lives with his wife in the Boston area. This is his first book.

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.

Great book.

Already getting results.

A good counterbalance to all the dietary craziness out there. Anyone in the "old" category, or going to be old, has got to be concerned about dementias.

Still reading, but so informative. He's a good writer too.

There is often more to the story and that is true when it comes to nutrition and health. Interesting insights by the author into diet and dementia.

I think it is terrific and full of wise information. I had read my library copy and then ordered it so I could have a copy of my own. Nan

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