

## Contents

- 4 Dr. Mehmet Oz and Dr. Michael Roizen**  
Is hormone therapy right for you?
- 5 Chronic Pain**  
Prolotherapy: Natural relief for joint pain
- 6 Diet**  
Guide to ancient grains
- 8 Ask the Doctor**  
Tinnitus: You don't have to live with it
- 9 Brain Health**  
5 health conditions with psychological solutions
- 10 Supplements**  
Vitamin K2: Saves heart, builds bones
- 11 Latest FDA Approvals**  
New help for heart failure patients
- 13 Breaking News**  
Saffron eases muscle pain
- 14 Cancer**  
Better ways to fight prostate cancer
- 15 Weight Loss**  
Vitamin D can help you slim down
- 16 Breakthroughs**  
Drug slows Alzheimer's

# Key to Brain Health Is in Your Stomach

Top neurologist reveals how “good bacteria” can stop dementia and keep your brain sharp into old age.

By Vera Tweed

There's an old saying that the way to a man's heart is through his stomach. While this may or may not be true, there's strong evidence that for both men and women the gut is the way to staying mentally sharp, preserving memory, and staving off dementia throughout a long life.

“If we pay attention to our good gut bacteria, we can have a meaningful effect on reducing brain degenerative issues, for the first time in history,” says neurologist David Perlmutter, M.D., author of a fascinating new book called *Brain Maker: The Power of Gut Microbes to Heal and Protect Your Brain — for Life*.

“What we understand about virtually every neurodegenerative condition is that the cardinal mechanism is inflammation,” he tells Health Radar, “and what goes on in the gut regulates the level of inflammation, from the top of your head to the bottom of your toes.”

## Inflammation: Brain Enemy #1

In addition to underlying age-related mental decline, Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, and other brain diseases,

inflammation sets the stage for diabetes, coronary artery disease, cancer, arthritis, weight gain, depression, and attention deficit disorders.

But it can be reversed with foods and supplements that restore beneficial bacteria, also called probiotics — a term derived from Greek, literally meaning “for life.”

## Finding Probiotic Foods

Probiotics, says Dr. Perlmutter, are naturally present in fermented foods.

Yogurt is an obvious example, but any food fermented in brine, such as pickles or sauerkraut made the old-fashioned way, is a beneficial source.

Unfortunately, to save time and reduce production costs, many commercially pickled foods no longer undergo the natural fermentation process that produces probiotics.

Here's how to tell if a pickled food contains beneficial bacteria: If water and salt are listed as ingredients and there is no vinegar, the food is likely fermented and beneficial.

But also look for “live cultures” in descriptions on food labels.

For example, Bubbies sauerkraut,

# Vitamin K2: Savior for Heart and Bones

By Vera Tweed

We don't usually think of a connection between the health of our heart and bones, and neither do most doctors. But there's strong evidence that the two go hand-in-hand.

People with undetected heart disease are six times more likely to suffer from bone loss and fractures, and on the flipside, those with low bone mass are more likely to have a heart attack or stroke.

What's the link? A lack of vitamin K2, which leads to calcium from food and supplements being deposited in the wrong places — in arteries instead of bones.

"K2 is like an usher in a theater," says Dennis Goodman, M.D., a board-certified cardiologist, director of integrative medicine at NYU Langone Medical Center, and author of *Vitamin K2: The Missing Nutrient for Heart and Bone Health*.

In this case, the usher escorts calcium to bones.

"Vitamin K2 helps calcium bind to the bone mineral matrix, keeping it away from blood vessels," Dr. Goodman tells Health Radar.

"This is important because if unwanted calcium deposits accumulate in the arteries, it can lead to blockages that can contribute to heart attacks and strokes."

## K2: Heart Savior

A study published in the *Journal of Nutrition* tracked 4,807 people over 55, monitoring dietary levels of vitamin K2 and heart health for 10 years.

The findings were stunning.

Those who consumed the most K2, about 45 micrograms (mcg) daily, were half as likely to die of heart disease, and 25 percent less likely to die from any cause.

Another study tested

supplements against a placebo among 244 postmenopausal women: 180 mcg daily of K2 (the MK-7 form) for three years.

During the period of the study, which was published in *Osteoporosis International*, the K2 supplements significantly slowed age-related bone loss.

Studies have also shown that only vitamin K2 (not K1) improves heart and bone health.

## How to Get Enough

"Our body does not make enough K2 and we can't get enough in our diet," says Goodman.

To get 45 mcg, the minimum amount found to be beneficial, you would need to eat huge amounts of food containing K2 every day, such as 8 pounds of beef, 1.3 gallons of milk, eight egg yolks, and 3 ounces of the hard-rind cheese. That's not likely to happen.

Supplements can solve the problem.

Dr. Goodman recommends taking up to 180 mcg daily of the MK-7 form of vitamin K2, which may be listed on supplement labels as "menaquinone-7" or a patented form called "MenaQ7."

If you take calcium supplements, he recommends switching to a combination of vitamin K2 with calcium, magnesium, and vitamin D. These all work together in the body.

Anyone on blood-thinning medication should take vitamin K2 only under the supervision of their healthcare provider, Dr. Goodman advises.

## Take the Right Form of Vitamin K

Vitamin K2 is in a family of vitamin K nutrients. Another form, vitamin K1, is necessary for healthy blood clotting and to prevent dangerous bleeding, but large doses may reduce the effectiveness of blood-thinning medications such as warfarin. Leafy greens are the chief source of vitamin K1 and can provide adequate amounts.

Vitamin K2 plays a different role. It isn't found in leafy greens and, because only small amounts are present in our everyday foods, is virtually impossible to obtain in adequate amounts from our diet.

In supplements, there are two forms of vitamin K2. One is MK-4, or menatetrenone, and the other is MK-7, also called "menaquinone-7," or a patented form called "MenaQ7." Goodman describes the difference this way: MK-4 is short-acting and cannot consistently maintain adequate levels of the nutrient, whereas MK-7 — the form he recommends — is long-acting and effective.