

Is My Brain Too Fat?



Isn't being worried about my *"muffin top"* or my too ample *"tush"* enough and now I have to worry about a fat brain as well!!!

Actually having a fat brain is a "good thing." Especially if you consider that a human brain is about 77-78% water, 10-12% lipids (fat) and 8% protein and 1% carbohydrates. That 10 – 12 % of lipid fat in the brain plays a very important role and you want to make sure you always have enough.

Here is where fat serves a very important role as a protective covering for neurons that are part of a huge communication network throughout your brain. It's known as the myelin covering or **myelin sheath** and it's made up of 80% lipid and 20% protein.

When you hear that your brain is 60% fat that sounds scary. What it actually means is this fat based myelin sheath is insulating the axon portion of all of your neurons so that electrical impulses can move down the axonal fiber to make their connections. Think of it as a ski slope of just the right snow packing so that you can ski down to your destination faster.

Here is when there begins to be a problem. According to Mona Lisa Schultz M.D. PhD, brain scans reveal that the myelin sheath will actually shrink in women who engage in extreme weight loss, especially through exercise, or unhealthy dieting. Not only will there be a slower transmission of electrical impulses down the axons, but **women will begin to produce more testosterone to the detriment of lower estrogen levels (... and that in itself is a whole other mind state).**

In the extreme cases of anorexia nervosa or bulimia, the **female brain begins to atrophy (waste away) – not a good thing**. The good news is that the myelin sheath as well as a balanced estrogen level can be re-established with healthy nutrition.

So if the *muffin top* or the *tush* is on the agenda for a makeover just remember, **a thin body can be nice but being able to have a smart, fat brain is even better.**

By Joyce Hansen