

Tips for Boosting Brain Health

Changes to your body and brain are a normal part of the aging process, but there are several healthy habits that can help boost brain health and slow cognitive decline and memory loss.

Exercise Regularly

Exercise increases blood flow to the entire body, including the brain. Several research studies have indicated that people who are physically active tend to be less likely to experience a decline in mental function. Set a goal to get 30-60 minutes of exercise several times a week. Focus on exercise that increases your heart rate.



Get Plenty of Sleep

Try to get 7-8 hours of consecutive sleep per night. Sleep is key to consolidating and storing memories effectively. Sleep apnea is detrimental to your brain's health. If you struggle to get consecutive hours of sleep or suspect you have sleep apnea, talk to your health care provider.

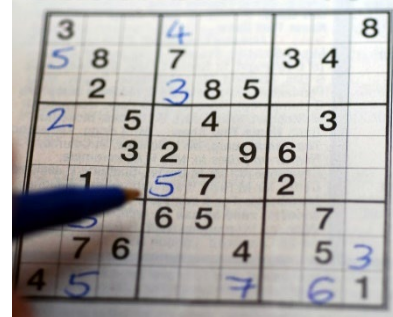
Eat a Mediterranean Diet

Eating a diet focused on plant-based foods, whole grains, healthy fats, and fish may significantly lower the risk of developing Alzheimer's disease. The omega fatty acids found in extra-virgin olive oil and other healthy fats are key to proper cell function, decreasing risk of coronary artery disease, increasing mental focus, and slowing cognitive decline in aging adults.



Stay Mentally Active

“Use it or lose it” applies to brain health just as it does to muscle health. Keeping your brain engaged with stimulating activities like crossword puzzles, Sudoku, reading, or putting together jigsaw puzzles can help to keep your brain in shape. Ideally, try to mix up the activities so that your brain must continue to adapt to new challenges. Passive activity such as watching TV does very little to stimulate the brain, so limit TV time.



Remain Socially Involved

Social isolation is linked to depression. Studies have indicated that solitary confinement is linked to brain atrophy. Staying socially active may strengthen your brain health and help to ward off anxiety, depression, and stress. Be intentional about planning social activities.

Source: Mayo Clinic Health System (mayoclinichealthsystem.org)