

Active Minds, Healthy Brains

*How to love and
care for your brain*



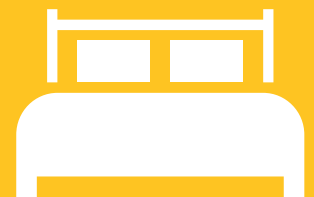
Tend to your personal relationships: Close personal relationships with friends and family help keep us mentally and physically healthy. Social relationships can also help prevent dementia. Taking up a volunteer position can be a great way to make new friends.

Tip: Visit your nearest senior center and ask for their monthly activities list. Dare yourself to make a new friend!



Practice good sleep hygiene: Create a routine for yourself that allows you to get a refreshing night's sleep. When you sleep, your brain does self-maintenance to improve its functioning. If you wake up tired in the morning, snore during the night or tend to fall asleep during the day, talk to your doctor to see if you have sleep apnea. Sleep apnea is easy to treat but can create problems if left untreated.

Tip: Exercise during the day to sleep better at night!



Stimulate your mind: Stimulate your mind by trying out new and challenging activities that you enjoy. Read the news and speak with someone about what you've read, learn a new skill, learn to use the computer or learn to play an instrument.

Tip: Start journaling: write about your days, the things you like and your experiences. Down the line, these pages can be a beautiful gift for friends or loved ones!



Control your chronic ailments: Do you need help managing conditions such as high blood pressure or diabetes? Ask your doctor for help to keep these issues under control. Medical conditions such as diabetes, high blood pressure and high cholesterol are all risk factors for dementia. In order to protect your brain, try to keep all your medical conditions well-managed.

Tip: Do not change your medications or doses without first consulting your doctor!



Get moving: Find a type of physical activity that you enjoy and dedicate yourself to doing it for at least 30 minutes per day. Aim for moderate to intense workouts such as dancing, speed walking or gardening.

Tip: Swimming is a great form of exercise. Consult with your local senior center to find discount classes available for seniors.



Have a positive outlook: You can create the experience you want. Fill yourself with positive energy, and you will have a more positive experience. People who have positive conceptions of aging tend to do better with the changes that come with aging.

Tip: Choose a mantra or phrase to repeat to yourself that helps you reframe things positively. For example, "Everything will work out."



Eliminate vices: Smoking and other vices can damage your body and brain. Your brain needs oxygen to function – let it breathe without toxins!

Tip: If you're having a hard time quitting smoking, talk to your doctor or social worker about free programs to help smokers who want to quit.



Nourish yourself: Your body needs high-grade fuel. Limit processed and packaged foods, especially those high in sugars and simple carbohydrates.

Tip: Choose whole grain foods, green leafy vegetables, legumes and fruits (especially berries!).

