

KEEP YOUR BRAIN STRONG: WHAT YOU CAN DO TO SUPPORT MEMORY, FOCUS & HEALTHY AGING

A MESSAGE OF HOPE

Memory loss and Alzheimer's disease are common concerns as we age, but they are not an inevitable part of growing older. We now understand that cognitive decline develops over time from a combination of factors—many of which are within our control. The encouraging news is that there are meaningful steps you can take to support your brain health, and even small, consistent changes can make a difference.

UNDERSTANDING YOUR RISK

Some people carry a gene called APOE, which helps the brain repair and maintain itself. One version of this gene, called APOE4, is associated with a higher risk of Alzheimer's disease. If you carry one copy of APOE4, your lifetime risk may be moderately increased, while carrying two copies may increase the risk more significantly. However, this is extremely important: having the APOE4 gene does not mean you will develop Alzheimer's disease. Your daily choices—how you eat, sleep, move, manage stress, and care for your overall health—play a major role in how these genes are expressed. Lifestyle factors can strongly influence whether certain genes are “turned on” or “turned off.”

EARLY DETECTION: LOOKING FOR CHANGES BEFORE SYMPTOMS BEGIN

One of the most exciting developments in brain health is the ability to identify early changes years before memory symptoms appear. New blood tests can help assess risk, including ptau217, which reflects brain changes associated with Alzheimer's disease, and the Amyloid Beta 42/40 Ratio, which helps assess plaque buildup in the brain. These tests may help identify risk earlier, allowing time to take action and support brain health proactively.

NOURISH YOUR BRAIN THROUGH FOOD

A healthy brain begins with how you nourish your body. Whole, unprocessed foods help reduce inflammation and provide steady energy for the brain. Focusing on vegetables—especially leafy greens—healthy fats like olive oil and avocado, and clean sources of protein can provide important nutrients that support cognitive health. At the same time, minimizing sugar and processed foods is important because blood sugar imbalance and chronic inflammation are strongly linked to cognitive decline. It can also be helpful to allow time for the brain and body to

repair overnight by aiming for approximately a 12-hour fasting window between dinner and breakfast and finishing your last meal at least 3 hours before bedtime. These simple habits can support metabolic health and brain function.

KEEP MOVING

Movement is one of the most powerful tools for brain health. Regular exercise improves blood flow to the brain and supports memory, mood, balance, and energy. The good news is that it does not need to be intense. Simple and consistent movement is what matters most. Daily walking, light strength training, stretching, and balance-focused exercises can all provide meaningful benefits over time.

CHALLENGE YOUR BRAIN

Your brain continues to grow and adapt throughout life. Keeping your mind active helps build new brain connections and supports cognitive resilience. Learning a new hobby, reading regularly, taking classes, working on puzzles, or simply trying new experiences can all help stimulate the brain. The key is novelty and gentle challenge rather than repeating the same routines every day.

PRIORITIZE SLEEP

Sleep is one of the most important—and often overlooked—parts of brain health. During deep sleep, the brain clears toxins and restores itself. Poor sleep over time can contribute to inflammation, memory problems, mood changes, and increased risk of cognitive decline. Most adults benefit from 7 to 8 hours of quality sleep nightly and maintaining a consistent sleep schedule. It is also important to evaluate for sleep apnea, especially if you snore, wake feeling unrefreshed, feel excessively tired during the day, or struggle with high blood pressure or weight gain. Untreated sleep apnea can significantly affect both memory and overall brain health.

REDUCE STRESS & STAY CONNECTED

Chronic stress keeps the body in a constant “fight or flight” state, increasing inflammation and making it harder for the brain to function optimally. At the same time, social connection is deeply protective for the brain. Studies consistently show that people who stay socially engaged tend to maintain better cognitive health. Spending time with family and friends, participating in church or community activities, engaging in prayer or meditation, practicing deep breathing, and spending time in nature can all help support emotional resilience and brain health. Your emotional health and brain health are deeply connected.

EVALUATE HORMONAL HEALTH

Hormones play an important role in memory, focus, energy, and mood. As we age, changes in estrogen, testosterone, and thyroid hormones can affect how the brain functions. Estrogen in particular helps support brain cell energy, improves communication between brain cells, and reduces inflammation in the brain. While hormone therapy is not appropriate for everyone, hormonal health is an important area to evaluate when cognitive symptoms are present.

REDUCE TOXIC BURDEN

Your environment matters more than many people realize. Exposure to mold and mycotoxins, air pollution, heavy metals, chronic infections, and poor air or water quality can contribute to inflammation and place stress on the brain. Supporting a clean living environment and addressing underlying health concerns may help reduce this burden and support cognitive health.

ADDITIONAL SUPPORTIVE THERAPIES

Emerging therapies may offer additional support for brain health in certain individuals. One example is Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy (HBOT), which may help improve oxygen delivery to the brain, supports circulation, reduces inflammation, and promotes healing and recovery. Research in this area continues to grow and may offer promising support for some patients.

START SIMPLE

You do not need to change everything at once. The most important step is simply to begin. Small, consistent steps over time can lead to meaningful improvements. Something as simple as walking daily, improving your sleep habits, reducing sugar and processed foods, or staying mentally and socially engaged can make a significant difference when practiced consistently over time.

FINAL THOUGHT

It is never too late to support your brain. With the right approach, you can help maintain memory, clarity, vitality, and independence as you age.