

10 Healthy Habits for Your Brain

As people pursue their New Year's resolutions, the Alzheimer's Association is encouraging everyone to commit to brain health in 2024. Research shows that healthy behaviors may reduce the risk of cognitive decline and help reduce the risk of dementia. A recent poll reported that retired Americans fear developing dementia more than any other condition.

While some brain changes are inevitable as we age, there is a growing body of research to suggest that adopting healthy behaviors, including healthy eating, exercising regularly, not smoking and staying cognitively engaged may help our brain health at any age. Several studies on risk reduction generated considerable attention in recent years, including one that found eating a large amount of ultra-processed food can significantly accelerate cognitive decline. Another study suggests that regular physical activity, even modest or low exertion activity such as stretching, may protect brain cells against damage.

Based on mounting scientific evidence, the Alzheimer's Association offers these 10 healthy habits for your brain. Follow as many of these 10 tips as possible to achieve maximum benefits for the brain and body.

- Challenge your mind. Be curious. Put your brain to work and do something that is new for you. Learn a new skill. Try something artistic. Challenging your mind may have short- and long-term benefits for your brain.
- Stay in school. Education reduces your risk of cognitive decline and dementia. Encourage youth to stay in school and pursue the highest level of training possible. Continue your own education by taking a class at a local library, college, or online. you!

- Get moving. Engage in regular exercise. This includes activities that raise your heart rate and increase blood flow to the brain and body. Find ways to build more movement into your day — walking, dancing, gardening — whatever works for
- Protect your head. Help prevent an injury to your head. Wear a helmet for activities like biking, and wear a seatbelt. Do whatever you can to prevent falls, especially for older adults.



- Be smoke-free. Quitting smoking can lower the risk of cognitive decline back to levels similar to those who have not smoked. It's never too late to stop.
- Control your blood pressure. Medications can help lower high blood pressure. And healthy habits like eating right and physical activity can help too. Work with a health care provider to control your blood pressure.
- Manage diabetes. Type 2 diabetes can be prevented or controlled by healthier eating, increasing physical activity, and medication, if necessary.
- Eat right. Eating healthier foods can help reduce your risk of cognitive decline. This includes more vegetables and leaner meats/proteins, along with

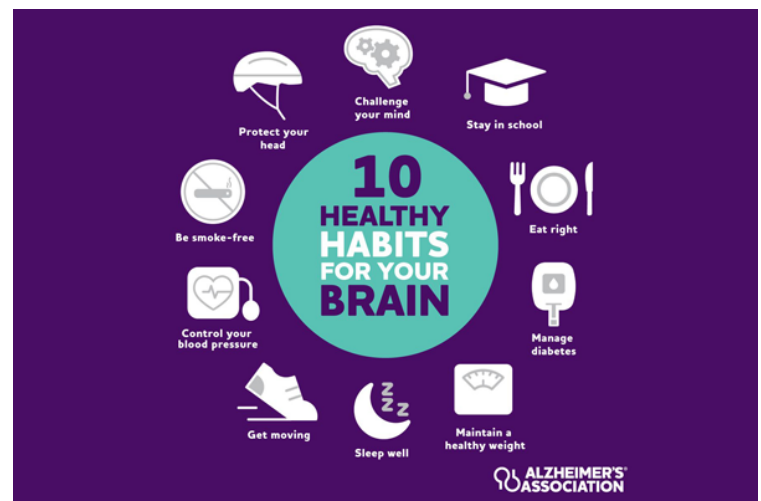
foods that are less processed and lower in fat. Choose healthier meals and snacks that you enjoy and are available to you. Make eating right a habit!



- Maintain a healthy weight. Talk to your health care provider about the weight that is healthy for you. Other healthy habits on this list — eating right, physical activity and sleep — can help with maintaining a healthy weight.
- Sleep well. Good quality sleep is important for brain health. Stay off screens before bed and make your sleep space as comfortable as possible. Do all you can to minimize disruptions. If you have any sleep-related problems, such as sleep apnea, talk to a health care provider.

“Research confirms what we have suspected for some time — people can lower their chances of cognitive decline with healthy habits,” said Melanie. “Adopting as many of these 10 everyday actions as possible can decrease dementia risk. This is true even for people who have a history of dementia in their families. It’s never too late or too early to take charge of your brain health.”

To learn more, visit https://www.alz.org/help-support/brain_health/10-healthy-habits-for-your-brain



Upcoming Virtual Education Opportunities

For more information or to register for any of the following programs, contact the helpline at 1-800-272-3900

- Effective Communication Strategies, February 13, 12:00 - 1:30 p.m.
- Managing Money, February 21, 10:00 - 11:30 a.m.
- Effective Communication Strategies, February 22, 4:00 - 5:00 p.m.
- Advancing the Science: The Latest in Alzheimer's and Dementia Research, February 23, 11:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
- Understanding Alzheimer's and Dementia, February 23, 4:00 - 5:00 p.m.
- Understanding and Responding to Dementia Related Behavior, February 28, 12:00 - 1:30 p.m.

Upcoming In-Person Education and Support Opportunities

For more information or to register for any of the following programs, contact **Melanie Williams** at meawilliams@alz.org

- February 6 12:30 - 2:00 p.m. Great Falls Public Library Memory Cafe, 301 2nd Ave N
- February 6 1:00 - 2:00 p.m. Dillon Caregiver Support Group, 1000 State Hwy 91 S.
- February 12 1:30 - 3:30 p.m. Art in the Moment, Missoula Art Museum, 335 N. Pattee Street
- February 14 4:30 - 6:00 p.m. Havre Support Group, Hill County Library, 402 3rd Street
- February 16 10:30 - 12:00 p.m. Connections at the Art Museum, Yellowstone Art Museum, 401 N. 27th Street, Billings
- February 28 12:00 - 1:00 p.m. Healthy Living for Your Brain and Body, Mussellshell Senior Center, 36 Main Street, Roundup
- February 28 12:00 - 1:00 p.m. Healthy Living for Your Brain and Body, Home on the Range, 902 3rd Street E, Roundup
- February 28 4:30 - 6:00 p.m. Havre Support Group, Hill County Library, 402 3rd Street

Volunteer Spotlight

The Alzheimer's Association Community Leaders Summit was held in New Orleans last week. This exciting meeting convened more than 1300 Alzheimer's Association volunteers, staff and community leaders from around the nation to experience and be inspired by our shared vision of a world without Alzheimer's and all other dementia. This year's theme - Strengthening Community Inspiring Hope encouraged volunteers and staff alike to extend their reach in their respective local communities. New and updated educational materials, which will become available in March, designed to help reach that goal were unveiled at the Summit.

Cyndy Martin, a volunteer educator and Montana Chapter Board Member from Billings, Julie Bushmaker, a volunteer educator and Montana Chapter Board Member from Butte, and Libby Harris, a Montana Chapter Board Member from Billings joined the Chapter Staff to learn from their peers and be empowered to play an important role in delivering locally on the mission and leading others to help the Association increase impact within their communities and for the overall Association. Each came back inspired and emboldened to be even more active in their fight against Alzheimer's and dementia.

THANK YOU! THANK YOU! THANK YOU!

We can't thank these wonderful women enough for sharing their time and talents with the Association!



**STRENGTHENING
COMMUNITY
INSPIRING
GROWTH**





FEBRUARY 2024

Interactive Programs
& Services Calendar

ONLINE RESOURCES

ALZConnected®

This online community connects you with other individuals living with early-stage Alzheimer's. Share questions, experiences and practical tips via message boards or create private groups organized around specific topics.

Alzheimer's Navigator®

An interactive online tool for people living with dementia and those who participate in providing care and making care-related decisions.

Online Education Center

Take free workshops about Alzheimer's disease, caregiving, healthy living and planning for the future.

Live Well Online Resources

A collection of free interactive tools that helps you navigate the personal and emotional challenges accompanying an Alzheimer's diagnosis and provides personalized steps for living well with the disease.

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
To register for virtual programs visit or call 800-272-3900. alz.org/crf				1	2	3
4	5	6 Great Falls Memory Cafe Great Falls Library 12:30 pm Dillon Support Group 1000 State Hwy 91 S 1:00 pm	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14 Havre Support Group 1000 State Hwy 91 S 4:30 pm	15	16 Connections at the Art Museum Yellowstone Art Museum 10:30 am -12:00 pm	17
18	19	20	21 Managing Money 10:00 am	22 Effective Communication Strategies 4:00 pm	23 Advancing the Science 11:30 am Understanding Alzheimer's and Dementia 4:00 pm	24
25	26	27	28 Healthy Living for Brain and Body Musselshell Senior Center 12:00 pm Home in the Range 1:30 pm Roundup Havre Support Group 1000 State Hwy 91 S 4:30 pm	29		

