

10 HEALTHY HABITS FOR YOUR BRAIN

TAKE CHARGE OF YOUR BRAIN HEALTH. THESE HEALTHY HABITS CAN LOWER THE RISK OF DEVELOPING COGNITIVE DECLINE AND POSSIBLY DEMENTIA. THIS IS TRUE EVEN FOR PEOPLE WITH A HISTORY OF DEMENTIA IN THEIR FAMILIES.

Follow as many of these tips as possible to achieve the most benefits for your brain and body. It's never too late or too early. Start now!



Protect your head

Help prevent an injury to your head. Wear a helmet for activities like biking, and wear a seatbelt. Protect yourself while playing sports. Do what 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.



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 you!

Challenge your mind



Be curious. Put your brain to work and do something that is new or hard for you. Learn a new skill. Try something artistic. Challenging your mind may have short- and long-term benefits for your brain.



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.



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.



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.



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.



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.

Learn more at [alz.org/healthyhabits](https://www.alz.org/healthyhabits).