

# TIPS TO MAINTAINING BRAIN HEALTH

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## Food and Water Intake

>>> 64+ ounces of water a day!



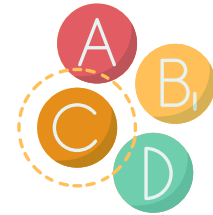
### Mediterranean Diet:

- Plant-based foods such as fruits, vegetables, whole grains, legumes, nuts.
- Replace butter with healthy fats such as olive oil.
- Herbs and spices instead of salt for flavoring foods.
- Limit consumption of red meat (< 2-3 times a month).
- Eat fish and poultry 2+ times a week.
- Drink red wine in moderation - there are even benefits to drinking 1-2 glasses socially!

According to Dan Buettner, the creator of Blue Zones, who studies many cultures, found that the Okinawan 80% rule has proven to be effective for maintaining your health.

- Eat until 80% full, then stop.
- Even consuming a small meal in the late afternoon or early evening and making that the last meal of the day has proven to be effective (Buettner, 2022).

## Vitamins



### Vitamin D:

- Experts have recommended 1,000-2,000 IU of Vitamin D everyday.
- Natural sun exposure for 30 minutes, 2-3 times a week is very important!

### Vitamin E and Vitamin C:

- Vitamin E is frequently found in foods such as fish, flax, walnuts, eggs, and leafy dark greens (spinach or kale).
- Vitamin C is found in oranges, strawberries, peppers, and broccoli.
- The combination of Vitamin C and E have proven to boost brain health!

### Vitamin B:

- Often found in meat such as chicken, eggs, leafy greens, wild-caught fish, and dairy products.
- Vitamin B6 and B12 can slow or even prevent cognitive impairment.

## Sleep



- Consolidated, 7-8 hours of sleep throughout a whole night for those 65+ is optimal for learning and memory.
- A daytime nap can be restorative for cognitive health in those 65+.
- No caffeine after the morning has passed will help to prepare the brain for good sleep.
- Good rest and sleep can be beneficial in our ability to retain memory, learn a new task, improve mood, motivation, judgement, and perception of events!

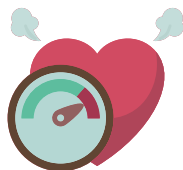
**Disclaimer: It is important to speak with your doctor before making changes to your regimen.**

## Exercise



- 150 minutes a week or 30 minutes a day of moderate exercise is crucial for delivering blood flow and oxygen to the brain (walking, biking, swimming).
- Gentle movement around the home (doing chores) or in nature (gardening) are also considered effective (Buettner, 2022).
  - Dancing to music is another great way to get in exercise!
- **Quick Tip:** Take walks together - even adding music to it can increase connection, social interaction, and stimulation (Alzheimers.gov, 2022).
- Not only is exercise great for brain health, but it can also decrease stress and depression.
- **Remember:** Consistent exercise can help decrease Alzheimer's disease up to 45% (Alzheimer's Society, n.d.).

## Control Blood Pressure



- High BP can increase risk of vascular dementia.
- Regular exercise and maintaining a healthy diet can help to decrease this risk.

## Play and Social Interaction



- It can improve resistance to developing health complications.
- Staying mentally active by participating in leisure and brain work activities such as reading, volunteering in the community, playing board games with family and friends, or taking on a new hobby improves brain health.
- Maintain connection with family and friends ensuring a strong support system.
- Participating in social activities helps to lessen loneliness and isolation which has proven to increase Alzheimer's (National Institute on Aging, 2022).

## Control of Hearing Problems



- Poor hearing can impact one's cognitive ability making it more difficult to socially interact leading to increased isolation.

## References

- Alzheimer's.gov. (n.d.). *Tips for caregivers and families of people with dementia*. <https://www.alzheimers.gov/life-with-dementia/tips-caregivers>
- Alzheimer's Society. (n.d.). *Physical activity and the risk of dementia*. <https://www.alzheimers.org.uk/about-dementia/managing-the-risk-of-dementia/reduce-your-risk-of-dementia/physical-activity#:~:text=Regular%20exercise%20can%20reduce%20the,studie%20into%20exercise%20and%20dementia.>
- Buettner, D. (2022, October 5). *Power 9. Blue Zones*. <https://www.bluezones.com/2016/11/power-9/>
- National Institute on Aging (NIH). (2022). *Reducing risk of dementia*. <https://order.nia.nih.gov/sites/default/files/2022-05/dementia-risk-tip-sheet.pdf>