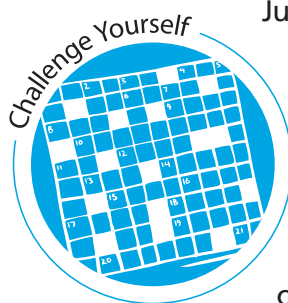


Taking Charge of Your Brain Health

Challenge Yourself

The human brain, sometimes called the “3 pound universe within,” is one of your most vital organs. It plays a role in every action and every thought and just like the rest of your body, it needs to be looked after. By making healthy lifestyle choices now, you may be able to reduce your risk of developing Alzheimer’s disease and improve your brain’s ability to sustain long-term health.

This sheet is part of a series that provides practical action steps, based on current research, which you can take to improve your brain health. Will it prevent Alzheimer’s disease? There are no guarantees, but healthy lifestyle choices will help keep your brain as healthy as possible as you age. And since a healthier brain can withstand illness better, it’s important to take action on the things you can control -- lifestyle choices.



Just as physical activity improves your body’s ability to function, studies show that keeping your brain active may help reduce your risk of developing Alzheimer’s disease.

Research is showing that by using your brain, you increase its networks of connections. A brain-healthy lifestyle also emphasizes the importance of overcoming routine and monotony in our daily lives. By approaching daily routines in new ways, you engage new or little used mental pathways.

Since the evidence suggests that mental stimulation enhances brain activity and may help maintain brain health throughout life, it is important to put your brain to work.

Challenging your brain doesn’t have to be difficult. It can be as simple as dialing the phone with your less dominant hand or as complex as learning a new language. Remember, the goal is to give your brain a new experience and a workout each and every day.

Heads
Up for
Healthier
Brains

Alzheimer *Society*



Take Action to Challenge Your Brain

- Play games to challenge your mind – chess, word and number puzzles, jigsaws, crosswords and memory games.
- Pursue a new interest such as learning to play a musical instrument, taking a course or going to the theatre.
- Break your routine – take a different route to the store or change the order of your morning routine.
- Involve one or more of your senses in a novel way - write your name with your opposite hand or count out coin change by using your sense of touch.
- Read a book – discuss it with a friend.
- Pursue cultural activities like going to plays, museums, concerts, galleries.
- Keep up hobbies such as sewing, carpentry or take up a new hobby.
- Cross train your brain – try a variety of mental challenges.

Note: Your abilities, health situation and interests should be taken into consideration when choosing brain healthy activities. If you have questions about your own situation, speak to your doctor or health-care provider.

Alzheimer *Society* T O R O N T O

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