



## Stimulate your brain by writing it down.

Your brain can only keep track of so much, so writing things down can help. Mapping out your day ahead of time and keeping a weekly agenda can help you organize your thoughts and activities.

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## Five Ways to Boost Your Brain Health

As we get older, small lapses in memory and other cognitive functions happen to all of us. Fortunately, there are simple steps to take to keep the brain healthy and prevent memory loss.

### 1. Get Moving

Exercise regularly. It's one of the best things you can do to help prevent age-related memory loss. Moving boosts blood flow to your brain and helps nerve cells in the part of the brain that controls your memory. Aim to get at least 30 minutes of aerobic exercise five days a week. Check with your doctor before beginning any exercise program.

### 2. Challenge Your Mind

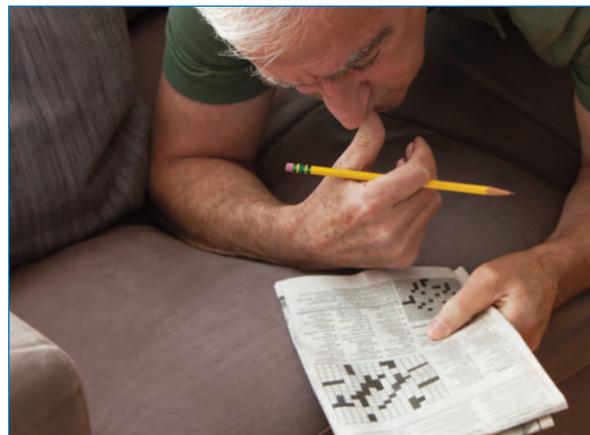
Try crossword puzzles, or games like Sudoku. Exercising your brain keeps it working. There are Smartphone games designed to keep the brain sharp and applications to help us track reminders. These tools may not necessarily restore brain function already lost, but may help you maintain your current level of brain fitness. With a little daily effort, you can support a well body by developing a well mind.

### 3. Stay Social

Try to be part of your community. It gets you engaged in conversations and activities, and keeps you thinking, talking, laughing, and planning. These are all important ways to keep your mind strong. Join a club, take a class or volunteer. The more active you are, the more your brain is working.

### 4. Sleep Well

When your brain doesn't rest, you can have problems remembering and concentrating.



Your brain needs sleep to restore itself and maintain the proper balance. The key is not the quantity, but the quality. Set up good sleep habits by going to bed and getting up at the same time every day. Create a calming routine for yourself before bed. Find ways to put the stresses of the day behind you so you can get high-quality, restorative sleep each night.

### 5. Watch What You Eat

Studies have found that a high-cholesterol diet raises the risk of dementia. Too much alcohol can also impair brain health. A healthy diet high in B vitamins and folic acid can reduce your risk of dementia by lowering levels of an amino acid called homocysteine. Follow an overall healthy diet high in whole grains, leafy greens, avocados, and other green fruits and vegetables. ■

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