

InFlight

Wellness Weekly



Physical Activity



BRAIN HEALTH MONTH

Take Care of Your Health

Physical activity is a valuable part of any overall body wellness plan and is associated with a lower risk of cognitive decline. If it's safe for you, engage in cardiovascular exercise to elevate your heart rate. Consider physical activities that may also be mentally or socially engaging, such as walking with a friend, taking a dance class, joining an exercise group or golfing. Adopting healthy exercise habits today will allow you to enjoy the lifelong benefits of regular physical activity. However, it's never too late to start – making healthy choices at any age is beneficial to your well-being. Always consult your doctor before starting any new exercise program.

Just 10 minutes of physical activity may boost cognitive function in the short-term...

Growing evidence suggests that many factors that increase the risk of heart disease also may increase the risk of dementia. These factors include smoking, obesity, diabetes, high cholesterol and high blood pressure.

...and exercising regularly for 6 months could actually reverse the symptoms of mild cognitive impairment.

- Visit your doctor regularly.
- Get your “numbers” checked, including weight, blood sugar, blood pressure and cholesterol.
- Actively seek treatment to keep yourself within healthy ranges.
- If you have diabetes, manage it properly.
- Stop smoking. If you don't smoke, don't start.
- Take action to minimize stress. Studies have found that regular physical activity decreases stress, increases your ability to manage stress and leads to better mood overall.
- Get enough sleep. Inadequate sleep due to conditions like insomnia or sleep apnea can result in problems with memory and thinking.
- Avoid excess alcohol.
- Seek professional assistance to address anxiety, depression or other mental health concerns.

Prevent falls

- Falls are the leading cause of fatal and non-fatal injuries in older adults, and one-third of adults over age 65 fall every year.
- Falls in which your head is injured may affect your brain's ability to function normally, causing unconsciousness, confusion and other symptoms.
- Engage in regular physical activity to improve your strength and balance and reduce your risk of falling.

Stay Physically Active. Retrieved from https://www.alz.org/help-support/brain_health/stay_physically_active



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See calendar on other side to see what is going on this week

Exercise is beneficial for physical and mental health and may improve the quality of life for people in all stages of dementia.

Benefits include:

- Improving the health of the heart and blood vessels, which can reduce the risk of high blood pressure and heart disease
- Reducing the risk of some types of cancer (particularly breast and colon cancer), stroke and type 2 diabetes
- Improving physical fitness - maintaining strong muscles and flexible joints can help people maintain independence for longer
- Improving the ability to dress, clean, cook and perform other daily activities helping to keep bones strong and reducing the risk of osteoporosis
- Improving cognition - recent studies have shown that exercise may improve memory and slow down mental decline
- Improving sleep
- Providing opportunities for social interaction and reducing the feeling of isolation
- Reducing the risk of falls by improving strength and balance
- Improving confidence
- Increasing self-esteem
- Improving mood.

Benefits of exercise and physical activity. Retrieved from <https://www.alzheimers.org.uk/get-support/daily-living/exercise/benefits>

A Personal Message From Your Health Promotion Health Myth Busting Team



Dear Health Myth Busters,

My Grandmother is suffering from Alzheimer's and general dementia. As a strong advocate of physical activity, I know it is important that she continues to be physically active for her overall health, specifically aerobic activity. Can you settle the debate as to whether or not strength training plays a role in her brain health too?

Sincerely,
Grandson of the Year

Dear Grandson of the Year,

It's wonderful to hear that you're engaged in helping your loved one live out a high quality of life. You're exactly right. The research is clear that regular exercise, i.e. jogging, walking, biking, stretching, swimming may prevent the progression of diseases of the brain. Regular exercise enhances the cells, tissues and vascularization which are important inducers of neurogenesis, memory improvement and brain plasticity. These benefits are important in the prevention of Alzheimer's disease.

To answer your question; when someone adds strength training to their regimen, it gets even better. Simple resistance training activities, i.e. walking, climbing stairs, moving around the house or outside working in the garden, can have long-term effects on brain health. Training such as this, that increases the muscle mass in the human body can have beneficial effects on metabolic aging. Practicing physical activity routinely throughout your lifetime, at any age and especially for older adults, is a great strategy for increasing overall health and risks involved in the development of poor brain health and Alzheimer's Disease.

Sincerely,
Health Myth Busters

Got questions on other health issues related to sleep health, physical activity, tobacco, or nutrition? Share them with us and we will help you "Bust The Myths!" Send your questions to usaf.jbsa.afmsa.mbx.hpo@mail.mil. Make sure to include in the subject line "Health Myth Buster." For more online health tips visit the Air Force Health Promotion webpage <https://www.airforcemedicine.af.mil/Resources/Health-Promotion/> or [B Andrews Health Promotion FB page at https://www.facebook.com/oint-Base-Andrews-Health-Promotion-](https://www.facebook.com/oint-Base-Andrews-Health-Promotion-)

HERE'S WHAT'S GOING ON
WHERE YOU LIVE AND WORK



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Your Local Health
Promotion Office



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Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday