

## Brain Fitness Tips

**Record Your Memories:** Research into brain plasticity (the ability of the brain to change at any age) indicates memory activities that engage all levels of brain operation—receiving, remembering and thinking—help to improve the function of the brain. Try recording your dreams or what you did a week ago to stimulate your brain.

**Listen Well:** Developing better habits of careful listening will help you in your understanding, thinking and remembering. Reconstructing a song you heard requires close attention and an active memory. When you focus, you release the neurotransmitter acetylcholine, a brain chemical that enables plasticity and vivifies memory.



## 4 Tips to Improve Memory

**Familiar Space Association:** One trick, known as the journey method or "memory palace," is to conjure up a familiar space in the mind's eye, and then populate it with images of whatever it is you want to remember.

**Chunking for Numbers:** Chunking is a way to decrease the number of items you have to remember by increasing the size of each item. Chunking is the reason that phone numbers are broken into three parts.



**Test Yourself:** Next time you want to recall the name of a movie or song, don't jump to the Internet. Challenge yourself to recall the information, even if it takes some time. The more you work your brain, the stronger it will be.

**Use Your Brain:** Take opportunities to practice your memory skills. Memory is a muscle, to be exercised and improved by paying attention.



**Mixed Nuts:** Peanuts, walnuts, pecans and other nuts contain compounds that may help with everything from fighting insomnia to promoting mental clarity and strong memory.



**Avocados:** Avocados are high in mono-unsaturated fat, a healthy fat that promotes blood flow, keeping your mind functioning at its peak.



**Leafy Greens:** Research suggests people who eat one to two servings of greens every day have the cognitive ability of a person 11 years younger than those who eat none.



**Chocolate:** The yummiest brain food of all. Dark chocolate is high in antioxidants and may improve focus and concentration.



**Wild Salmon:** Wild salmon is high in omega-3 fatty acids that are important for brain performance and memory.

For more information on brain performance and memory, visit [Dole.com](http://Dole.com)

## Brain Foods!



**Blueberries:** High in antioxidants, blueberries have been linked with improved mental function. Most notably, regular consumption may improve memory.



**Flax Seeds:** Flax seeds are a top source of ALA, an omega-3 fatty acid that helps the cerebral cortex (responsible for processing sensory information) function.



**Spinach:** Spinach is loaded with magnesium, which may support growth in synaptic endings, boosting the speed of brain cell transmission and increasing memory recall.



**Broccoli:** This vegetable has been shown to improve memory function as well as slow the aging process. Cooked broccoli is one of the best vegetarian sources of choline, important for brain structure and function.

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## BRAIN HEALTH

Health and Wellness Series #9



# Top Ten Health Tips For Brain Health

Listed below are ten tips to retain mental sharpness.

## 1

### Eat Smart

Eat a diet rich in omega-3 fatty acids, protein, antioxidants, and B vitamins while limiting bad fats. Focus on fruit & vegetables and limit processed foods.



## 2

### Stay Mentally Active

Engage in stimulating activities such as learning a new language or skill, doing a puzzle, or taking an interesting class to challenge your mind and maintain mental function.



## 3

### Stay Social

Spend time with friends, volunteer, and travel to keep your mind active and engaged.



## 4

### Exercise Regularly

Aim for 30 minutes of moderate exercise a day to increase circulation, improve coordination, and help prevent conditions that increase risk of dementia such as heart disease and diabetes.



## 5

### Sleep Well

Stick to a regular sleep schedule. Lack of sleep can have a negative impact on brain health.



## 6

### Keep Hydrated

Carry a water bottle throughout the day and take frequent sips. Even slight dehydration can raise stress hormones that can damage the brain over time.



## 7

### Manage Stress

Do yoga, laugh with friends, or meditate to help relieve stress and preserve your ability to remember and learn.



## 8

### Maintain a Wise Weight

Monitor your weight and stay in your healthy goal range to reduce risk of chronic diseases that affect brain health.



## 9

### Consider Your Genes

Consult your doctor if your family history puts you at risk for dementia to find ways to preserve brain health.



## 10

### Avoid Bad Habits

Refrain from smoking, heavy drinking, drug use, and other behaviors that increase risk of dementia and cognitive decline.



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