

2. Munch More Brain Food

More than 5 million Americans have Alzheimer's disease. This brain-wasting disease breaks the links between nerve cells. Over time, it causes memory loss and thinking problems. While genes may be a factor, researchers believe dietary habits may hold clues to prevent it.

A recent study found that those with the healthiest brains have better diets than those with diagnosed brain and memory problems.² They eat more fruits, vegetables, nuts, legumes, fish, and lean meats. Researchers also found that diets high in trans fats caused the brain to shrink and caused memory loss.

- Eat more plant-based foods like broccoli, spinach, and dark-colored berries.
- Add more walnuts, almonds, and fish to your diet.
- If you're a vegetarian, take a vitamin B12 supplement to improve brain function.
- And avoid foods high in trans fats like fried foods; powdered mixes for cakes, brownies, and waffles; packaged cookies; biscuits; frozen or creamy drinks; and pre-made pie crust.

Go shopping:
Stock up on
healthy brain foods
[tinyurl.com/
pfsp02t](https://tinyurl.com/pfsp02t)



3. Get Your Zzzs

If you don't get enough sleep, you'll probably feel groggy and tired. And your reaction times may be slowed. In fact, one out of eight injury-related crashes is caused by drowsy driving.³

Over time, lack of sleep also makes the cells in the body less responsive to insulin. This raises the risk for diabetes and high blood pressure. Both of these problems can damage the brain. When your brain is short on sleep, it is less able to store memories. And it doesn't get rid of toxins linked to certain brain diseases.⁴

- Aim to get 7 to 8 hours of sleep a night.

4. Be Social

You and your brain are better off in more ways than one when you're around family and friends.

Research shows that people who have good friendships and social ties are less likely to develop brain diseases as they age.⁵ Positive social contact helps reduce stress hormones in the brain. And it helps improve memory, learning, judgment, language, and intuition.

- Make time to be social.
- Connect with family and friends.
- Participate in group activities

5. Be More Active

When you're active, your brain releases endorphins that enhance mood and reduce pain. Studies show that exercise also helps people feel less stressed, anxious, or depressed. Being active can also be a good way to boost self-esteem, improve sleep, and aid in weight loss.⁶

- Take a walk during your break.
- Go to the gym over lunch or after work.
- Use the stairs instead of the elevator.
- Look for ways to be more active.
- Aim to exercise at least 30 to 60 minutes a day.

10 ways
to make
exercise a
daily habit
[tinyurl.com/
abha7c8](https://tinyurl.com/abha7c8)

6. Practice Problem Solving

Solve a crossword. Complete a Sudoku puzzle. Play a game of chess or other game of strategy. When you keep your mind engaged by thinking and solving problems, your brain benefits.

Research shows that people are at lower risk of memory loss when they play games that make them think. Problem solving makes the neuron connections less vulnerable to damage.

- Play games of strategy.
- Learn a new skill or take a class.
- Engage in activities that require you to solve problems.

When you take care of your brain, you'll be able to think faster, have better focus and attention, and remember more.

References

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