

... FOR THE HEALTH AND WELL-BEING OF YOU AND YOUR FAMILY

TRAIN YOUR BRAIN

STAY SHARP

Have you ever had a name on the tip of your tongue, but just could not quite remember? Was it Eric, Erin, or Evan? We tend to associate that type of forgetfulness with growing older. Is a decline in cognitive skills an unavoidable part of aging? Not necessarily.

Experts are finding that healthy lifestyle choices can help your brain stay sharp, clear, and focused.



FOOD FOR THOUGHT

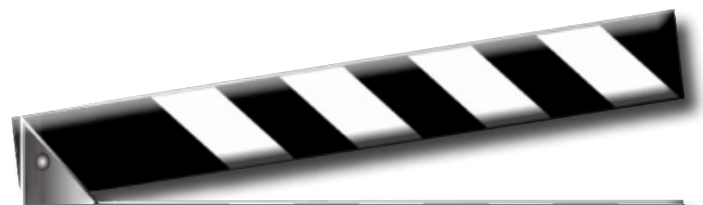
Although the brain is only 2% of our body weight, it consumes more than 20% of our energy. So, the next time you sit down for a meal, remember to feed your brain for optimal function.

Which of these brain foods will you include in your diet?

<u>Vegetables</u>	<u>Fruit</u>
Spinach	Dark Berries
Broccoli	Plums
Cauliflower	Oranges
Squash	Blackcurrant
Sweet Potatoes	Red Grapes
Onions	Acai
Brussels Sprouts	Cherries
Carrots	Kiwis
Avocados	Pomegranate

BUILD YOUR BRAIN

- ✓ **Pay attention.** It can take about eight seconds of intense focus to ingrain a piece of information into your memory.
- ✓ **Use several senses when learning.** Try to relate information to colors, textures, smells, and tastes.
- ✓ **Do something new.** Get out of your comfort zone to challenge your brain.
- ✓ **Play games.** Games and puzzles that require thought and problem solving can help to develop and maintain cognitive skills.
- ✓ **Interact with others.** Social activity keeps your brain engaged, fights depression, and improves your mood.



Coach's Quick Take

Scientists once believed that some of our brain cells died off when we got older. But it's now clear that we not only hang on to our neurons—we also grow new ones.

Throughout our lifetime, our brain is continually reshaping itself in response to what it learns.

Exercise your mental capacity by expanding your knowledge or doing routine things in a different way.

RELAX YOUR WAY TO A BETTER BRAIN

Unmanaged stress in our lives can lead to higher levels of stress hormones, such as adrenaline and cortisol. These hormones can negatively impact brain function and processing speed, as well as decrease the size of the brain cortex area associated with long-term memory.

To reduce stress and decrease sustained exposure to these hormones, try one of the following strategies:

1. Get 6-8 hours of restorative sleep.
2. Take breaks from stressful stimuli by going for a walk, exercising, or eating in a quiet and peaceful environment.
3. Practice proper breathing from the diaphragm. Ask your wellness coach to show you how.

Which of the above strategies are you most confident that you could implement? (Circle one) *If none of these apply, what can you do to reduce the effects of stress in your life?*



EXERCISE BENEFITS YOUR BODY AND GIVES YOUR BRAIN A BOOST



Exercising improves oxygen intake. Brain function benefits from increased oxygen, promoting the development of chemicals that aid in brain cell repair.



Exercise supports new neuron formation and allows the brain to process thoughts and problems more efficiently. Studies have also shown that exercise prompts growth of new blood vessels.



Exercise increases the size of the hippocampus (the learning and memory area of the brain). Research has proven that children who participate in increased periods of physical activity reach greater levels of academic achievement and receive higher test scores.



30 minutes of exercise 3 times a week greatly lowers the risk of dementia and cognitive decline. According to the Mayo Clinic, exercise is the most effective tool in preventing Alzheimer's disease.



Many types of physical activity help lengthen attention span and increase focus. School children have shown improvement in their ability to concentrate after short bouts of exercise.



Try one of these brain & body boosters!

- Jog in place for 1 min.
- Do 15 jumping jacks.
- Jump rope for 30 sec.

JUST KEEP MOVING!