

10 WAYS TO **LOVE** YOUR BRAIN

START NOW!

It's never too late or too early to incorporate healthy habits.

Growing evidence indicates that people can reduce their risk of cognitive decline by adopting key lifestyle habits. When possible, combine these habits to achieve maximum benefit for the brain and body.



BREAK A SWEAT

Engage in regular cardiovascular exercise that elevates your heart rate and increases blood flow to the brain and body. Several studies have found an association between physical activity and reduced risk of cognitive decline.



HIT THE BOOKS

Formal education in any stage of life will help reduce your risk of cognitive decline and dementia. For example, take a class at a local college, community center or online.



BUTT OUT

Evidence shows that smoking increases risk of cognitive decline. Quitting smoking can reduce that risk to levels comparable to those who have not smoked.



FOLLOW YOUR HEART

Evidence shows that risk factors for cardiovascular disease and stroke — obesity, high blood pressure and diabetes — negatively impact your cognitive health. Take care of your heart, and your brain just might follow.



HEADS UP!

Brain injury can raise your risk of cognitive decline and dementia. Wear a seat belt, use a helmet when playing contact sports or riding a bike, and take steps to prevent falls.



FUEL UP RIGHT

Eat a healthy and balanced diet that is lower in fat and higher in vegetables and fruit to help reduce the risk of cognitive decline. Although research on diet and cognitive function is limited, certain diets, including Mediterranean and Mediterranean-DASH (Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension), may contribute to risk reduction.



CATCH SOME ZZZ'S

Not getting enough sleep due to conditions like insomnia or sleep apnea may result in problems with memory and thinking.



TAKE CARE OF YOUR MENTAL HEALTH

Some studies link a history of depression with increased risk of cognitive decline, so seek medical treatment if you have symptoms of depression, anxiety or other mental health concerns. Also, try to manage stress.



BUDDY UP

Staying socially engaged may support brain health. Pursue social activities that are meaningful to you. Find ways to be part of your local community — if you love animals, consider volunteering at a local shelter. If you enjoy singing, join a local choir or help at an after-school program. Or, just share activities with friends and family.



STUMP YOURSELF

Challenge and activate your mind. Build a piece of furniture. Complete a jigsaw puzzle. Do something artistic. Play games, such as bridge, that make you think strategically. Challenging your mind may have short and long-term benefits for your brain.

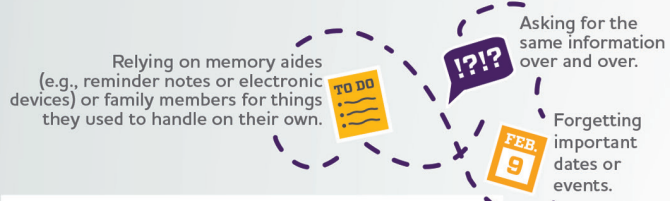
Visit [ALZ.ORG/10WAYS](https://www.alz.org/10ways)
to learn more.

alzheimer's 
association®

If you notice any of the 10 Warning Signs of Alzheimer's in yourself or someone you know, don't ignore them. Please consult your physician.

#1 Memory changes that disrupt daily life

One of the most common signs of Alzheimer's, especially in the early stages, is forgetting recently learned information. For example:



Typical age-related changes: Sometimes forgetting names or appointments, but remembering them later.

#2 Challenges in planning or solving problems

Some people may have difficulty concentrating and take much longer to do things than they did before.



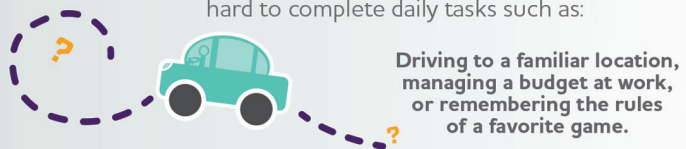
Some people may experience changes in their ability to develop and follow a plan or work with numbers.

They may have trouble following a familiar recipe or keeping track of monthly bills.

Typical age-related changes: Making occasional errors when balancing a checkbook.

#3 Difficulty completing familiar tasks

People with Alzheimer's often find it hard to complete daily tasks such as:



Typical age-related changes: Occasionally needing help to use the settings on a microwave or record a television show.

#4 Confusion with time or place

People with Alzheimer's can lose track of dates, seasons and the passage of time.

They may have trouble understanding something if it is not happening immediately. Sometimes they may forget where they are or how they got there.



Typical age-related changes: Getting confused about the day of the week but figuring it out later.

#5 Trouble understanding visual images and spatial relationships



Some people may have difficulty reading, judging distance and determining color or contrast. In terms of perception, they may pass a mirror and think someone else is in the room. They may not realize they are the person in the mirror.

Typical age-related changes: Vision changes related to cataracts.

#6 New problems with words in speaking or writing

People with Alzheimer's may have trouble following or joining a conversation. They may stop in the middle of a conversation and have no idea how to continue or they may repeat themselves. They may struggle with vocabulary, have problems finding the right word or call things by the wrong name.

Typical age-related changes: Sometimes having trouble finding the right word.



#7 Misplacing things and losing the ability to retrace steps

A person with Alzheimer's disease may put things in unusual places.

They may lose things and be unable to go back over their steps to find them again. Sometimes, they may accuse others of stealing. This may occur more frequently over time.



Typical age-related changes: Misplacing things from time to time.

#8 Decreased or poor judgment

People with Alzheimer's may demonstrate unusual changes in judgment or decision making.



For example, they may use poor judgment when dealing with money, giving large amounts to telemarketers.

They may pay less attention to grooming or keeping themselves clean.

Typical age-related changes: Making a bad decision once in a while.

#9 Withdrawal from work or social activities

A person with Alzheimer's may start to remove themselves from hobbies, social activities, work projects or sports. They may also avoid being social because of the changes they have experienced.



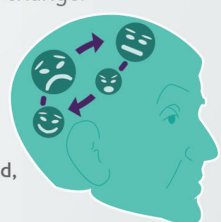
Typical age-related changes: Sometimes feeling weary of work, family and social obligations.

#10 Changes in mood and personality

The mood and personalities of people with Alzheimer's can change.

They may be easily upset in places where they are out of their comfort zone.

They can become confused, suspicious, depressed, fearful or anxious.



Typical age-related changes: Developing very specific ways of doing things and becoming irritable when a routine is disrupted.