

*\*content written for a women's digital health platform to go live in winter '22*

## **What To Do About Brain Fog, Memory Lapses, and Difficulty Concentrating During Menopause**

Maybe you forgot a name or a word, or why you walked into a room. Maybe your laser focus has become more like split-second focus. It can be frustrating - and sometimes scary - but you are not alone. Estrogen plays an important role in brain function, and as its levels drop throughout menopause some women may experience difficulty concentrating, brain fog, or memory lapses.<sup>1</sup> The good news is there are steps you can take which may help combat these symptoms.

### **Brain Tips**

- **Hydrate**  
The brain is made up of 73% water,<sup>2</sup> so it needs to stay hydrated! For adult women, the recommended daily intake for water is 2.3 quarts (appx 9 cups);<sup>2</sup> this can come from beverages such as coffee, tea, and juice, in addition to water. Just make sure to drink caffeine in moderation and steer clear of juices with a high sugar content.
- **Practice yoga and meditation**  
Meditation and yoga have proven positive effects on the brain.<sup>3,4</sup> There are plenty of in-person, online, and app options available that offer all different levels and durations; take a look and find the one that works best for you.
- **Exercise**  
Incorporate movement and exercise throughout your day.<sup>5,6</sup> It doesn't have to be a big deal; for example, park farther away, take the stairs, or have a mini dance break!
- **Get good sleep**  
Get adequate - and quality - sleep.<sup>7</sup> We know how hard that can be, so we devoted a whole article just to that! [Click here for Sleep tips \(links to Sleep article\)](#)
- **Learn a new skill**  
Learning new things helps the brain stay sharp.<sup>8</sup> Suggestions include exploring a new language, reading, doing puzzles, or even taking a dance class.
- **Social contact**  
Foster and maintain your social networks<sup>9</sup> - one idea is to schedule a walk with a friend, so you get the exercise and social component all in one! Look to explore growing new

social connections.<sup>9</sup>

- **Eat a nutrient-rich diet**

- Cut back on trans fats.<sup>10</sup> The manufactured form of these fats, known as partially hydrogenated oil, can be found in a variety of fried and processed products.
- Up your “good” fat intake by increasing Omega-3’s<sup>10</sup> (especially polyunsaturated PFUs), found in fish, shellfish, and nuts/seeds.<sup>11</sup> For those with dietary restrictions, beneficial sources include flaxseeds (ground), chia, olive oil and avocados.
- Eat a wide variety of fruits and vegetables; think “eat the rainbow.”<sup>12,13</sup>

### **Other causes of cognitive issues**

A decline in cognitive function can be caused by many factors other than decreasing estrogen levels, such as: thyroid issues, dehydration, too much alcohol, certain medications, sleep issues, anxiety/depression, and Alzheimer’s/dementia.<sup>14</sup> Therefore, if you are experiencing any new or worsening symptoms, call your doctor immediately.

*The contents of this article are for informational purposes only and not intended to provide medical advice, treat, diagnose, or replace the advice of a licensed medical professional. Please consult with your healthcare provider before making any treatment, dietary, exercise, or lifestyle changes to ensure that these changes are appropriate for you.*

#### Sources

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