

# Keep Your Brain Sharp

## Three tips for flexing your mental muscle this Brain Awareness Month



More than 55 million people live with Alzheimer's or another dementia worldwide—but too few people still understand its impact or its major risk factors. But this June marks Alzheimer's and Brain Awareness Month, which aims to help educate people about the effects of aging on the brain, and inspire more research toward a cure.

While many risk factors for developing Alzheimer's or another dementia are unavoidable, including age and genetic predisposition, studies have found that keeping your brain active could lower the risk of cognitive decline. Here are a few tips for keeping your brain sharp and healthy as you age.



### Stay Active

Good vascular health is associated with better cognitive health. Physical activity helps maintain blood flow to the brain and lowers your risk of high blood pressure, which can reduce the risk of heart disease and stroke—two factors that are thought to contribute to the development of certain types of dementia

### Eat a Healthy Diet

Your diet can play a big role in your brain health. Consuming alcohol and foods with high levels of saturated fat can negatively impact memory and other brain functions. To keep your mind sharp, choose foods containing nutrients such as vitamin E, B vitamins, and omega-3 fatty acids—all of which have been linked to better cognitive function.

### Stimulate Your Brain

Our bodies need exercise to stay healthy, and that includes our brains. You can help strengthen your mind "muscles" through activities that engage and stimulate your brain. This could include learning a new skill, socializing more, reading books, playing games or doing puzzles, or adopting new technologies. Keeping mentally active as you age could lower the risk of cognitive decline.