**Daily Activities Guaranteed to Boost Your Brainpower**

A mind really is a terrible thing to waste. As we get older, our brains begin to age and lose neurons, and, eventually, our brain tissue starts to shrink. Cognitive decline can lead to an increased risk for illnesses such as Alzheimer’s and dementia.

While this might sound scary, rest assured that there are plenty of things you can do to keep your mind healthy and sharp for as long as possible. And, as it turns out, this doesn’t mean you have to play tedious memory games every day to get your brain muscles flexing! With some healthy habits and hobbies, you can easily help combat the effects of an aging brain and keep it sharper longer.

Try out some of these daily brain-boosting activities to keep your brain healthy and strong:

**Read a challenging book**

Reading is one of the best things you can do for your brain. Reading literature that challenges you is even better. You’re guaranteed to strengthen your brain by learning new words and building reading comprehension skills. Try joining a book club to get some motivation to start a challenging book. You’ll gain a lot of insight from the members of the club and meet some new friends, too!

**Take a break from Netflix**

The average American adult watches nearly [35 hours of TV a week](http://www.businessinsider.com/how-much-tv-do-americans-watch-2016-6). That’s bad news for your brain. Binge watching your favorite TV series requires minimal brain activity. A [study](https://www.livescience.com/52959-television-cognitive-function.html) found that adults who watched more than three hours of TV per day on average over the next 25 years were more likely to perform poorly on certain cognitive tests, compared to adults who watched little TV each day. Try replacing the time spent watching TV on brain-boosting activities to lower the risk of early cognitive decline.

**Exercise**

Regular exercise [improves brain function](http://info.totalwellnesshealth.com/blog/exercise-for-better-brain-and-mental-health) in a variety of ways. It promotes brain cell growth, improves learning ability, and helps sharpen your memory. Basically, the more you move, the better protected you are from early cognitive decline. A person who exercises regularly can lower their risk of dementia and Alzheimer’s. Engage in physical activity for at least 30 minutes a day, 5 days a week to help combat the effects of an aging brain.

**Eat well**

Eating a variety of nutritious foods will boost your memory, concentration, and overall brain function. The foods that you eat have a direct effect on your mood, attitude, and memory. To support brain health, increase your intake of fruits and veggies and keep a balanced diet. Check out this [article](https://www.bbcgoodfood.com/howto/guide/10-foods-boost-your-brainpower?cm_mmc=ExactTarget-_-email-_-Good-food-newsletter-464_2015_10_14_short_copy-_-email) for some of the best brain-boosting foods!

**Branch out**

Spend more time with people who challenge you or think differently than you do. Those who challenge you will help you understand different perspectives or cause you to think critically about certain topics – and these are both great things for your mind! Don’t be afraid to branch out from your normal friend group and talk to someone with different hobbies or interests as you. You’re never too old to develop a new perspective!

**Get enough sleep**

While you’re snoozing, your brain is hard at work. Your brain needs enough time to recharge and process information from the day. Without enough sleep, your brain will become over-stimulated, leading to a significant decline in concentration, problem-solving skills, and overall cognitive function. Get at least 7-8 hours of quality sleep each night, and don’t forget about the power of a quick catnap when you’re feeling drowsy.

**Reduce stress**

Chronic stress wreaks havoc on your cognitive and mental health. If you want a healthy brain, you’ll want to [reduce any high levels of stress](http://info.totalwellnesshealth.com/blog/make-your-life-less-stressful-instantly-with-these-11-tips) in your life. Try meditating once a day or do some [stress-relieving exercises](http://info.totalwellnesshealth.com/blog/7-stress-relieving-exercises-for-an-instant-pick-me-up). Taking time to de-stress each day will boost your concentration and attentiveness and increase overall mental clarity.

**Learn something new**

According to Einstein, if a person spends 15 minutes a day learning something new, in a year he or she will be an expert. Make it a goal to learn something new every day – whether it’s a fun fact or a new recipe. Take non-credit courses at a local community college, pick up a new hobby, or learn a new language. Continued adult learning helps slow the brain’s aging process and will keep your mind sharper for longer.

Mental exercise is as just as important as a healthy diet and physical activity. Remember that your brain is a muscle – it needs to be exercised to stay strong and powerful. Incorporate some of these brain-boosting activities each day to keep your brain sharp and healthy.