



A Publication of the Presbytery of West Virginia

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Vol 4 Issue 3♦ March 2021

AARP Brain Games: <https://games.aarp.org/>

Free Crossword Puzzles: http://www.qets.com/crossword_puzzles.htm

Free Games in large print: <https://www.puzzles.ca/>



How Seniors Can Boost Brain-Health

It is important to take care of our minds as well as our bodies as we age. Though most seniors are in good mental health, many older adults are at risk of developing neurological and mental health disorders, especially dementia and depression.

The good news is that regardless of your age, there are proactive steps you can take to keep your brain healthy and reduce your risk of developing dementia, depression, or other mental conditions. Here are six ways you can keep up your mental fitness:

Practice using your memory

Regularly engaging in memory exercises can help improve both short- and long-term recall. Make a list of grocery items, for example, and do your best to memorize it – then test yourself an hour later to see how many items you remember. Other ideas for practicing memory skills are doing math in your head, drawing a map of somewhere you have recently been, or memorizing the lyrics to a popular song.

Play 'thinking' games

Research has shown that brain-training games can help keep older adults sharp for as many as 10 years longer. Whether it's the daily crossword puzzle, Sudoku, Scrabble, or another game that excites you, make an effort to engage in games or puzzles that make you think. If you are looking for online resources, AARP has a library of brain games on their website and DailyCaring has free large-print crossword puzzles for seniors.

Learn something new

Taking on a new hobby or skill can improve both cognitive functioning and your sense of well-being as you age. Learning a foreign language, for example, is a process of listening and internalizing new sounds, which stimulates the brain. The same goes for new artistic or athletic pursuits. Whether it's cooking, painting, tennis, or a musical instrument you've always wanted to learn, cultivating a new hobby is an excellent way to keep your mind active and learning.

Seek out social interaction

When regularly engaging in social activities and having stimulating conversations, seniors are less likely to develop both depression and dementia. Invite loved ones to spend time together, or call them if they're far away. Find out what activities are being held in your community or religious group. Maintaining these connections is one of the most effective ways to keep your spirits high and your mind busy and engaged.

Keep stress under control

Chronic stress can wreak havoc on both the mind and the body, especially as we age. Though it is not always easy to let go of worries, fears, or responsibilities, it is important to make time each day to relax and reflect. Whether meditation, exercise, spending time with an animal, or treating yourself to a spa treatment makes you feel at ease, taking active steps to reduce stress will help you ward off depression and other mental health concerns such as anxiety or substance abuse.

Maintain physical fitness and a healthy diet

An active, healthy body is critical in maintaining an active, healthy mind. In fact, recent Alzheimer's research suggests that making certain lifestyle changes can do more to ward off memory loss than drugs or medical treatments. Eating a balanced, healthy diet and enjoying physical activity such as walks or group exercise classes is a key way to maximize brain function and improve overall health.

Spring Flowers

T	T	E	C	L	O	E	E	A	H	D	P	L	L
Y	T	I	R	M	S	L	W	I	A	P	A	I	S
U	C	T	O	I	S	T	R	H	R	B	R	T	W
U	Y	O	C	C	Y	R	A	T	I	A	D	F	E
C	I	T	U	A	S	E	D	Y	W	B	C	A	E
H	R	U	S	L	I	M	N	S	Y	Y	U	L	T
T	I	L	R	I	A	E	E	R	S	S	A	S	W
N	S	I	E	L	D	P	V	O	T	B	I	A	I
I	D	P	Y	Q	A	E	A	F	E	R	N	D	L
C	E	S	L	S	A	R	L	S	R	E	U	A	L
A	N	M	L	A	W	C	Q	A	I	A	T	H	I
Y	H	H	I	I	Y	Y	S	S	A	T	E	L	A
H	P	N	L	Y	S	N	A	P	M	H	P	I	M
A	V	J	O	N	Q	U	I	L	S	Q	I	A	E

LAVENDER
SWEET WILLIAM
HYACINTH
LILLY
PANSY
BABY'S BREATH
DAHLIA
FORSYTHIA
PETUNIA
DAISYS
CREPE MERTLE
JONQUILS
LILAC
TULIPS
IRIS
WYSTERIA
CROCUS