



HOW TO SUPPORT YOUR BRAIN HEALTH

Scientists continue to discover how closely our mind and body is connected. It turns out that what you do to keep your body and heart healthy is also good for your brain. Feed your body, mind and soul by incorporating these activities:

GET MOVING: Being active for at least 30 minutes a day, with an increased heart rate for 20 minutes.

EAT UP: A low-fat diet with an emphasis on brain health foods: blueberries, fatty fish (salmon, sardines and herring), nuts and seeds, avocados, dark chocolate (65-80% cocoa), beans, unsweetened pomegranate juice diluted with water or seltzer, and freshly brewed tea (without sugar and not bottled or canned).

KNOW YOUR BLOOD PRESSURE: High blood pressure can have serious effects on your brain health. This is a great reason to visit the parish nurse monthly blood pressure screening!



DRINK MODERATELY, IF AT ALL: This is true for people of all ages! Moderate drinking is 1 drink per day for all women and men over 65; 2 drinks per day for men age 65 and younger.

GET SOME SLEEP: Poor or inadequate sleep, due to insomnia or sleep apnea, can have serious physical effects, but can affect memory and thinking, too. Seven to eight hours is a good night's sleep.

PICK UP THE PHONE: Stay connected to family and friends. Invite them over for a healthy meal, go on a hike together or just hang out. Emails work, too.

DISCOVER A NEW TALENT: When you learn new things, you engage your brain. Pick up a new hobby, learn to speak another language or just do something you have never done before. Memorize something every day.

MANAGE YOUR STRESS: Chronic stress leads to health problems. Some ways to deal with stress have already been addressed: exercise, social support and participate in a hobby. Other things that can be done include meditation, yoga or tai chi; engage in positive self-talk (look at the positive not the negative) and laugh. The old adage is true: laughter is the best medicine!

TALK TO YOUR HEALTHCARE PROVIDER: Change in brain function is to be expected as you age. If you have questions, ask your healthcare provider at your next appointment.



References: brainhealth.aci.gov and Prevention Magazine



"I pray that you may enjoy good health and that all may go well with you, even as your soul is getting along well." 3 John 1:2