Risk Reduction & Brain Health

Physical Exercise for a Healthy Brain

BrainGuide™ by UsAgainstAlzheimer's

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Exercise provides a whole range of benefits, including for your brain. Regular physical activity has been proven to improve memory, attention, and overall function.[1] And, over time, staying active through things like walking, dancing, yoga, and other exercise could help lower your risk of cognitive decline.[2] Find the right activities, create a routine, start slowly and build up, engage with others, and ask your doctor about any concerns.

You Can Take Action

Try these tips to jumpstart healthy exercise habits that will help keep your brain fit:

Find the right activities. Everyone, at every age, can stay active – you just need to find the right activities. Older adults should get at least 2½ hours per week of moderate aerobic exercise, such as walking, jogging, swimming, dancing, or biking.3 You can also try flexibility and balance activities, like yoga or tai chi, and strength activities, like resistance training or at-home workouts.

Create a routine. Establishing a regular exercise schedule will bring you the greatest brain health benefits. Find times that are the most convenient, such as early in the morning or later in the day. If you don't have much time, try several short, 10-minute periods of walking or other moderate exercise. Overall, older adults should try to be active at least 3 days per week.

Start slowly and build up. If you're just starting a new exercise routine, begin with what feels comfortable, and then slowly add more time and intensity. This will help you avoid injury and find a routine that you can keep doing every week.

Engage with friends, family, or classes. Exercising with family or friends can be fun, energizing, and help you get into a routine. You can also sign up for group classes through a gym or community organization.

Ask your doctor about concerns or chronic conditions. If you have any specific questions or concerns about exercise, ask your doctor or another health professional. They can help with a safe, effective plan, even if you or a loved one has a chronic condition like arthritis, COPD, or diabetes.

1. https://cp.neurology.org/content/8/3/257
2. https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(15)60461-5/fulltext
3. https://www.nia.nih.gov/health/how-older-adults-can-get-started-exercise

UsAgainst Alzheimer's

UsAgainstAlzheimer's exists to conquer Alzheimer's disease. We take on the toughest problems; bring all of "Us" together to break down barriers; advocate for research that will speed treatments to market; and drive changes that matter most to people living with the disease. The unquestionable complexity of this challenge to stop Alzheimer's fuels our determination to overcome it. We will not rest until brain-span equals lifespan - for everyone.