



Lowering Your Risk for Cognitive Impairment

9 THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

Not all risk factors for dementia are in our control. But research shows certain modifiable behaviors can positively impact our chances of developing dementia. Here are some ideas.

1

BRAIN

PROTECT YOUR HEAD
from injury. Use seat restraints, helmets, and other precautionary devices

2

KEEP LEARNING.
Challenge your brain with new information learned in a formal setting.

3

SLEEP WELL.
Rest and cleanse your brain with uninterrupted quality sleep.

4

HEART

FUEL YOUR BLOOD
with nutritious, balanced food choices including plenty of fresh fruits, vegetables and healthy proteins.

5

EXERCISE REGULARLY
to promote vigorous blood flow to the brain, which demands about 25% of the body's blood to function well.

6

LUNGS

QUIT SMOKING
to prevent lung damage and ensure the brain receives a steady, adequate supply of oxygen.

7

KEEP A CLEAN ENVIRONMENT
Good air quality is essential to good lung function. Minimize exposure to volatile chemicals and fine particulates indoors and out.

8

OVERALL

STAY HYDRATED
Water eliminates toxins from the body, replenishes cells, and promotes healthy organ function.

9

ELIMINATE PROCESSED SUGAR
Sugar promotes inflammation in the body which can increase risk for cognitive decline.



Possible Red Flags to Cognitive Changes

No two people age identically, not even identical twins. Cognitive changes are natural when we age. What should we expect?

Some forgetfulness is to be expected. Some difficulty finding a word or a name is normal. And some slow down in productivity, even in familiar routines, is also to be expected. But some brain changes are also signals of cognitive decline that may lead to dementia-related impairment.

The changes below may be signs of normal aging OR red flags of more profound cognitive change. These changes can appear in any order, may or may not be apparent in any particular person, and are not all-inclusive.

IF YOU SEE A RED FLAG, IS IT NORMAL AGING OR SOMETHING MORE SERIOUS?

Ask your self whether...

- the behavior is different from before, for that person?
- the person is unable to recover from the “lapse”?
- the frequency of this issue is interrupting daily life?

If any of these are true, it's time to do some research. Some of these signs could indicate a treatable condition, rather than dementia.

