

QUICK TAKES



WORKOUTS FOR YOUR BRAIN

We all know that to keep our body in shape we need to stay active. Your brain is no different. If you want to maintain your brain health and preserve your memory as you age, try these tips:

Reduce your television watching by an hour a day or more.

Learn a foreign language, play a musical instrument or cultivate a hobby that demands attention to detail.

Work crossword puzzles, sudoku or jigsaw puzzles

Participate in a physical activity that involves strategy and coordination – anything from team sports to dance lessons.



Healthy Living As You Age

Doctors used to joke that the secret to a long life was simple: Choose the right parents. Very funny – but not very accurate. While the genetic blueprint dealt to you at birth may influence your health, there is overwhelming evidence that your own choices – including how much you exercise and what you eat – can have a profound impact on how long and well you live.

Some researchers believe that genes may control only about one-third of human destiny. The rest is in your hands – and your feet, it seems. Staying active is an essential part of maintaining a body that looks and feels young; most experts recommend at least 30 minutes of exercise a day. Here's a closer look at that advice, as well as other key choices that affect longevity and quality of life.

Exercise

You don't have to train like an Olympian to keep disease at bay, according to a 2001 study published in the Journal of the American Medical Association. Harvard University researchers followed nearly 40,000 women from 1992 to 1999. Those who worked out vigorously got important health benefits, but the Harvard team found that women who simply walked regularly – even for as little as one hour per week at a leisurely pace – significantly reduced their risk of heart disease.

Build Strength

At age 25, the average person begins losing about a half-pound of muscle per year, unless he or she keeps those muscles working. If you look forward to hoisting a grandchild over your head someday, the sooner you begin a regular strength-training program the better. Need another reason? Muscle burns lots of calories – about 25 percent of the total you eat every day. Within a few months after you start lifting weights, you'll pack on two to four pounds of lean, calorie-crunching muscle.

Stay at Your Best Weight

You can't overemphasize the importance of a healthy weight. Some 61 percent of Americans are overweight, and obesity contributes to 300,000 deaths in the United States each year. Consider this lesson from the National Weight Control Registry, which tracks 3,000 Americans who have lost more than 30 pounds and have kept the weight off for at least a year: Most "successful losers" say they've maintained their leaner physiques the old-fashioned way, by exercising regularly and sticking to a low-fat diet. In fact, many studies have demonstrated that slight under-eating is associated with longevity.

Eat Less Red Meat

Eating the right foods can produce more than skinnier thighs – it can add years to your life. If your meal plan needs tweaking, a too-hearty appetite for red meat might be a good place to start. The typical American eats the equivalent of about five quarter-pound hamburgers per week. See if this finding from a 1999 scientific review published in the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition makes salads sound more appealing:

Vegetarians are 24 percent less likely than carnivores to die of heart attacks. Some scientists believe that saturated fat – the artery-clogging kind found in red meat and whole-fat dairy – may increase the risk of some forms of cancer.

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Healthy Living As You Age continued

Try Some Fish and Soy

You don't have to give up meat entirely to live long and well, but many nutrition experts recommend substituting other sources of protein, such as fish and soy products, as often as you can. One study strongly suggests that eating a few servings of fatty fish, such as salmon, each week can reduce the risk of sudden cardiac death, which claims 250,000 American lives each year. And research shows that eating even a little soy every day helps lower your cholesterol. Some studies also hint that micronutrients in tofu, tempeh and other soy foods may slow or prevent growth of certain tumors.



Load Up On Fruits and Veggies

Fruit and vegetables pack a mean cancer-fighting punch. A study published in 2000 found that men who eat three or more servings of veggies every day cut their risk of prostate cancer by 48 percent. And while research that fiber may prevent colon cancer is not yet conclusive, other studies now suggest that calcium may help prevent the disease — a potential bonus for people who already load up on the mineral for strong bones.

Studies indicate whole grains and other forms of roughage bolster the cardiovascular system by lowering cholesterol; they're also packed with B vitamins, which seem to play a role in heart health.

Smile!

It's probably no surprise that avoiding tobacco and limiting alcohol to a drink or two a day help keep your body in shape as you age. What you may not know is that keeping a healthy perspective on life is critical, too. George E. Vaillant, M.D, director of the

Harvard Study of Adult Development, has studied and interviewed hundreds of people, some of whom lived long lives, others who died young.

In his book *Aging Well*, he reports that one key difference he found between the two groups was attitude. Happy, healthy old-timers are usually the kind of people, he

writes, who are most likely to "turn lemons into lemonade and not turn molehills into mountains." When it comes to decoding the secrets of a long life, the messages don't come any simpler than that.

NOTE: If you're experiencing depression or other mental difficulties, talk to your doctor about getting support.

Source: Inverness Medical

Waldorf Salad Prepare 3-4 hours in advance | Makes: 6 Servings

This Waldorf salad isn't quite like Mom's. It's much lower in fat, thanks to fat-free mayonnaise and nonfat buttermilk in the dressing. Toasting the walnuts in the oven or on the stovetop for a few minutes heightens their flavor and allows you to get away with using a smaller amount.

Ingredients

3 large Cortland, Gala, Honeycrisp or Granny Smith apples
2 teaspoons fresh lemon juice
1 ½ cups (8 oz/240 g) seedless green grapes, sliced in half
2 celery stalks, tough strings removed, stalks thinly sliced
1/3 cup [1 1/2 oz/45 g) raisins
½ cup (4 oz/120 g) fat-free mayonnaise
½ cup (4 fl oz/120 ml) nonfat buttermilk
2 teaspoons sugar
3 tablespoons crumbled blue or feta cheese
2 tablespoons toasted walnuts, chopped

Preparation

1. Dice apples and toss with lemon juice in a large bowl. Add grapes, celery and raisins.
2. In a small bowl, whisk mayonnaise, buttermilk, sugar and blue cheese, if using. Stir well and pour over apple mixture. Toss to mix. Cover and refrigerate for at least 30 minutes before serving.
3. Sprinkle with toasted walnuts and serve.

Nutritional info / serving

131 Calories
2.1g Fat
0.3g Saturated fat
3.0g Protein
28g Carbohydrate
3.1g Fiber
175mg Sodium



WALDORF SALAD

Source: HealthyLiving Kitchens