

Visiting Nurse & Hospice of Litchfield County



Community Health Programs Department

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Keeping Your Mind Sharp

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Keeping Your Mind Sharp

Healthy Diet control your health by what you put on the end of your fork, Adequate protein, plenty of plant based foods. Maintain optimal hydration-mostly water.
*Key dietary objective is Metabolic flexibility.....control **GLUCOSE** .

Regular Exercise- exercise with cardio & strength training reduces AD risk by 50%.
Brisk 20' walk/day reduces AD risk by 40%.
The brains favorite physical exercise is “strength training”- especially legs.
* Dementia is primarily a vascular disease—key is increase circulation.
Make your living space a standing, moving space.

Social Engagement lonely individuals are at significant increased risk for AD. Socially active individuals are healthier than their lonely counterparts both physically & mentally. Why? Stimulation is good for the brain...people provide stimulation.

Mental Stimulation- keep your brain intellectually engaged.
Engage the brain in activities that are complex, challenging and purposeful....
Objective is to increase neurological reserves.
Studies show impaired vision & hearing contribute to a greater risk of AD.

Stress Management- cortisol, the stress hormone, damages the brain over time.
Engage in a practice that brings you joy & peace.

Quality Sleep-poor sleep reduces growth of new hippocampus cell= memory issues.
Memories get consolidated during sleep and the glymphatic system “takes out the trash” (ie. Beta amyloid). Less than 5 hours sleep increase AD risk by 30-50% compared to those getting 6-8 hours. Poor sleep increases cortisol.

Manage your health conditions and medications-Be an active participant in managing your health. The healthier you keep your body, the healthier your brain.

Key Nutrients for Brain Health

Omega-3's (cold water fish & grass fed meats), calms inflammation & improves cell function-eating 1x/wk reduces AD risk by 60% (decreases homocysteine levels)

B vitamins (B1, B9-folate, **B12**),

Zinc-necessary for memory & thinking skills *highlighted nutrients are memory specific

Vitamin C, Vitamins A & E, **Vitamin D3**,

Magnesium- higher Mg is related to better brain health, esp post-menopausal women

MIND Diet

Mediterranean-DASH Intervention for Neurodegenerative Delay

Researched and Developed by Rush University Medical Center in Chicago. The study was published in the Journal of Alzheimer's and Dementia. They found that the MIND diet did better than the Mediterranean or the DASH (Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension) diet in reducing risk of developing Cognitive decline.

Strict adherence reduced risk by 53%, moderate adherence cut risk by 35%. Those that moderately followed the diet had a cognitive function equivalent of someone 7.5 years younger.

Diet Guidelines:

Include

Green Leafy Vegetables- High in Vitamin A & C —at least 2x/wk but 6+ best
Kale, Collards, Spinach, Broccoli, etc.

Other Vegetables - have a salad and at least one+ other/day

Nuts & Seeds- healthy fats, fiber & antioxidants 5x/wk

Berries- only fruit specifically recommended 2x/wk
Blueberries & strawberries top choices

Beans- high in fiber and protein, low in fat 3x/wk

Whole grains- important player 3 servings/day

Fish- oily fish (avoid mercury laden, farm raised) 1x/wk or more

Poultry- 2x/wk or more

Olive oil- primary fat supply (organic, extra virgin cold pressed)

Butter- if organic/grass fed

Herbs & Spices- use liberally

Dairy -organic cultured cheeses, yogurt- glutathione, A2 type (avoid if intolerant)

Limit

Wine- preferably red- less is better

Red Meat- only 4x/wk (organic, grass fed & game meats)

Avoid

Margarine, Conventional Butter & Vegetable oils- 1 tablespoon/day

Processed Cheeses- 1x/wk or less

Pastries and Sweets- no more that 5x/wk

Fried, Processed, and Fast Foods- 1x/wk or less

**A three year study began in 2018 to document the effects of following this diet on the prevention of Dementia and Alzheimers-results need further exploration.

Researched and Prepared by: Nancy L. Frodermann, RN, MSN
Sources Used include: Alzheimer Association, Alzheimer Research and Prevention Foundation
National Institute on Aging
Rush University- Martha Clare Morris, ScD (Nutritional Epidemiologist~developed MIND diet)