

# Adult Day Self-Care Newsletter

June 2024

## Brain Health

The brain changes across the lifespan in many ways and continues changing into adulthood. The connections throughout the brain continue to develop and reorganize, based on what you do and what happens around you. Keeping your body healthy helps maintain your brain health. Specific actions can support brain health. Other actions you take can help prevent brain injury, disease, and cognitive decline. A healthy body and a health brain will go a long way towards extending your quality of life as well as how long we live. There are some factors that affect brain health that you can't control, but there is a lot that you can do. This issue identifies some steps you can take now for your brain health—including learning about your brain! On page 2, you can find some tips and resources. As always, we encourage you to share what you learn with family, friends, co-workers, and the families of people who attend your Adult Day Center. Check out our brochure on [Brain Health](#). You can read it online, download it for free, or order print copies. Brochures on many other topics are available, too.

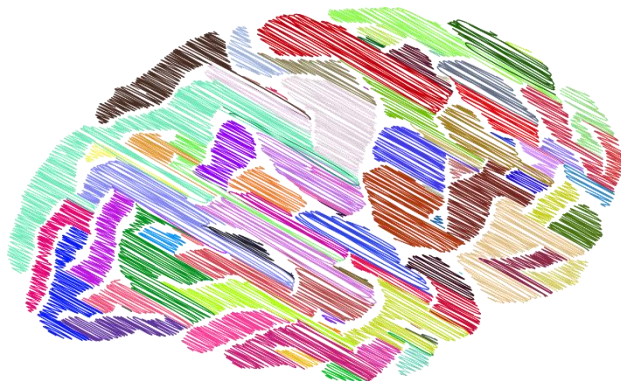
## The Aging Brain: Normal Changes

As we age, useful connections are formed and strengthened in the brain. Memories are stored. Some connections are removed if they're not needed. Illness or injury can cause damage.

While everyone is different, some changes in brain function are normal and expected as people progress from infancy to old age, such as slower processing and more trouble with quickly shifting attention (often called multi-tasking).

Older adults may find it harder to recall what's needed from the grocery (use a list!). Naming difficulties are common and not necessarily a problem, such as the "tip of the tongue" phenomenon—you know a name but can't find it.

Compared to young adults, older adults often have a larger vocabulary, more general knowledge, and effective problem-solving based on this knowledge. Some adults, known as [super-agers](#), have little or no cognitive decline, performing much better than their same-age peers on cognitive tests.



### Professional Training Opportunity for YOU

#### **Vibrant Connections: Person Centered & Trauma Informed Care in Aging Services**

In Person [June 6<sup>th</sup>](#) 10am to 3pm, Middlesex Fire Training Academy, Sayreville, Click [HERE](#) to register.

OR

Virtual Sessions on [June 11<sup>th</sup>](#) and [June 18<sup>th</sup>](#) 10:30 to 12:00, Click [HERE](#) to register.

CE's and registration are complimentary.

Contact Mary Catherine Lundquist for more info, [lundqumc@ubhc.rutgers.edu](mailto:lundqumc@ubhc.rutgers.edu).

## Habits for Brain Health

- **Exercise:** Physical activity can help prevent illness and can help you manage your life better and for a longer time, even if you do develop cognitive impairment.
- **Eat well:** Add vegetables (at least 3) and fruits (at least 2) to your daily diet. Limit sugar. Drink plenty of water.
- **Connect with others:** Spend time with people you care about and in groups that are interesting and meaningful to you.
- **Challenge your mind:** Do varied activities that involve mental stimulation, but don't waste your money on "brain games," which don't significantly improve brain health.
- **Manage stress:** Find ways to manage or lower your stress, such as as mindfulness meditation, deep breathing, and doing hobbies that you enjoy.
- **Get help for depression:** Regular exercise, therapy, and medication all improve mood. If you feel depressed, get help right away.
- **Get a medication review:** Some medicines can affect brain health. Learn about possible side effects and interactions.
- **Protect your head** by wearing your seat belt, using a helmet for sports and home maintenance, preventing falls in the home and outside on slippery surfaces.
- **Limit tobacco and alcohol.** Both can increase the risk of dementia and stroke.
- **Sleep well.** Getting enough deep sleep is critical to brain health. Find tips [online](#).
- **Control your blood pressure.** Check it regularly and take any meds as prescribed.

## For More Information

- *Chasing Life* podcast (Dr. Sanjay Gupta): <https://www.cnn.com/audio/podcasts/chasing-life>
- *Brain and Life* (free magazine): <https://www.brainandlife.org/>
- National Institute on Aging: [Cognitive health](#)
- The FDA describes "false promises and so-called Alzheimer's cures" on their [website](#)

## Care2Caregivers Website

You can find the [Adult Day Resources pages](#) on our website through the drop-down menu in the Professional Resources section.

As always, you can access the Self-Care resources on our website for free. Use our NEW link:

**Self-Care for Professional Caregivers**  
<https://care2caregivers.com/professional-resources/self-care/>

### Upcoming Caregiver Education 2024

Brain Health: Strategies for Staying Well While Caring for a Family Member with Memory Loss:

June 12, 2024 1:00pm  
Click [HERE](#) to register



For more info email Mary Catherine:  
[lundqumc@ubhc.rutgers.edu](mailto:lundqumc@ubhc.rutgers.edu)  
or call Care2Caregivers at 890-424-2494



visit our website [www.care2caregivers.com](http://www.care2caregivers.com) for information on caregiver support groups

# 1-800-424-2494