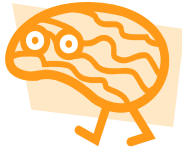


Benefits of Physical Activity for the Brain



Did you know that being physically active is a way to enhance and protect brain function?¹

Over the past decade, extensive research has shown that physical activity can have benefits for overall health including brain health and cognitive functioning particularly in later years.



Did You Know Walking Is Great For Your Brain?

Walking is great for your brain because it increases circulation, glucose (sugar), and oxygen that reaches your brain. With increased movement, such as walking, your heart has to beat harder, therefore allowing more blood to flow to the brain.³

One study has shown that older adults who walk on a regular basis have a significant improvement in memory skills, learning ability, concentration, and abstract reasoning compared to older adults who live a sedentary life style.³

Use It or Lose It!

The human brain is remarkable. It is able to continually adapt and rewire itself. Even as we age, our brain has the ability to grow new neurons. Neurons are brain cells that communicate with each other.³

It is known that severe mental decline is caused by disease, however, most age related memory loss is a result of inactivity and lack of mental stimulation.³

Physical activity promotes a healthy brain and its mental processes. Recent research has also shown that physical activity may help prevent Alzheimer's disease.³

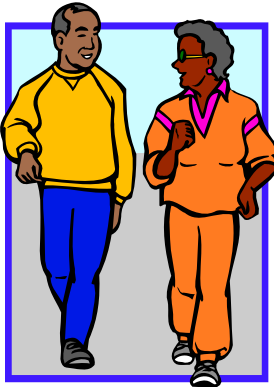


What is Brain Plasticity?

Brain plasticity is the ability of the central nervous system to adapt or change to what is happening in the environment around you.³

Maintaining brain plasticity and health throughout life is an important health goal.³

Being *in motion* can help to achieve this goal as research suggests that physical activity can maintain or improve brain plasticity.³



Exercise Your Brain

Increased intellectual activity can help to protect you from Alzheimer's disease.³

Here are a few examples of intellectual activities:

- Reading
- Doing puzzles
- Painting
- Woodworking
- Playing cards or board games
- Playing a musical instrument
- Doing home repairs³

Make sure to consult a health care professional before starting any new form of physical activity.



For more information and resources contact **in motion** (306) 655-Do It or visit the **in motion** website www.in-motion.ca.

References

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2. Cotman, C.W. & Berchtold, N.C. (2002). Exercise: A behavioural intervention to enhance brain health and plasticity. *TRENDS in Neurosciences*, 25(6), 295-301.
3. The Franklin Institute: Resources for Science Learning. (2004). *The Human Brain*. Retrieved March 31, 2008 from <http://www.fi.edu/learn/brain/exercise.html>