



# Six Pillars of Brain Health

# Disclaimer

This session is intended to be informational and educational and DOES NOT constitute medical advice, diagnosis or treatment.

You should always seek the advice of a physician or other qualified health care provider for diagnosis and treatment of your specific medical needs, for questions regarding personal health or medical conditions, and before beginning or changing any treatment, activity, program or dietary plan.

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## Good News

Regardless of our age, there are things we can do to help mitigate age-related cognitive decline and optimize our chance of maintaining cognitive health.





## Agenda

### Six Pillars of Brain Health

1. Be Social
2. Engage Your Brain
3. Manage Stress
4. Ongoing Exercise
5. Restorative Sleep
6. Eat Right

# Importance of Brain Health

## Why is brain health more important than ever?

- Adding “life to years”
- Rethinking retirement
- Skyrocketing health care costs
- Current brain research



# **Be Social**

## Pillar 1

# Pillar 1. Be Social



## Stay Socially Engaged

- Stay engaged with friends, family and community
- Avoid isolation



**How are you staying socially  
engaged?  
Share your tips**



# Pillar 1. Be Social

## Get Involved

- Join a club or participate in sports
- Attend community events
- Consider adopting a pet or pet sitting
- Volunteer with a local non-profit
- Organize a regular virtual game night or book club
- Attend virtual community events



# AARP Resources for Connection

## Create the Good: Volunteer Opportunities

- [aarp.org/ctg](https://aarp.org/ctg) or [aarp.org/virtualvolunteering](https://aarp.org/virtualvolunteering) for virtual opportunities

## AARP Virtual Community Center: Events

- [aarp.org/vcc](https://aarp.org/vcc)

## AARP Friendly Voice

- [aarp.org/friendlyvoice](https://aarp.org/friendlyvoice)
- 1-888-281-0145 for English or 1-888-497-4108 for Spanish



# Engage Your Brain

## Pillar 2

## Pillar 2. Engage Your Brain



### Learn New Things

- Challenge your brain in new ways
  - Pursue new interests
  - Stay curious
- Challenge your thinking



**How are you learning new things?  
Share your tips**

# Pillar 2. Engage Your Brain

## Challenge Yourself

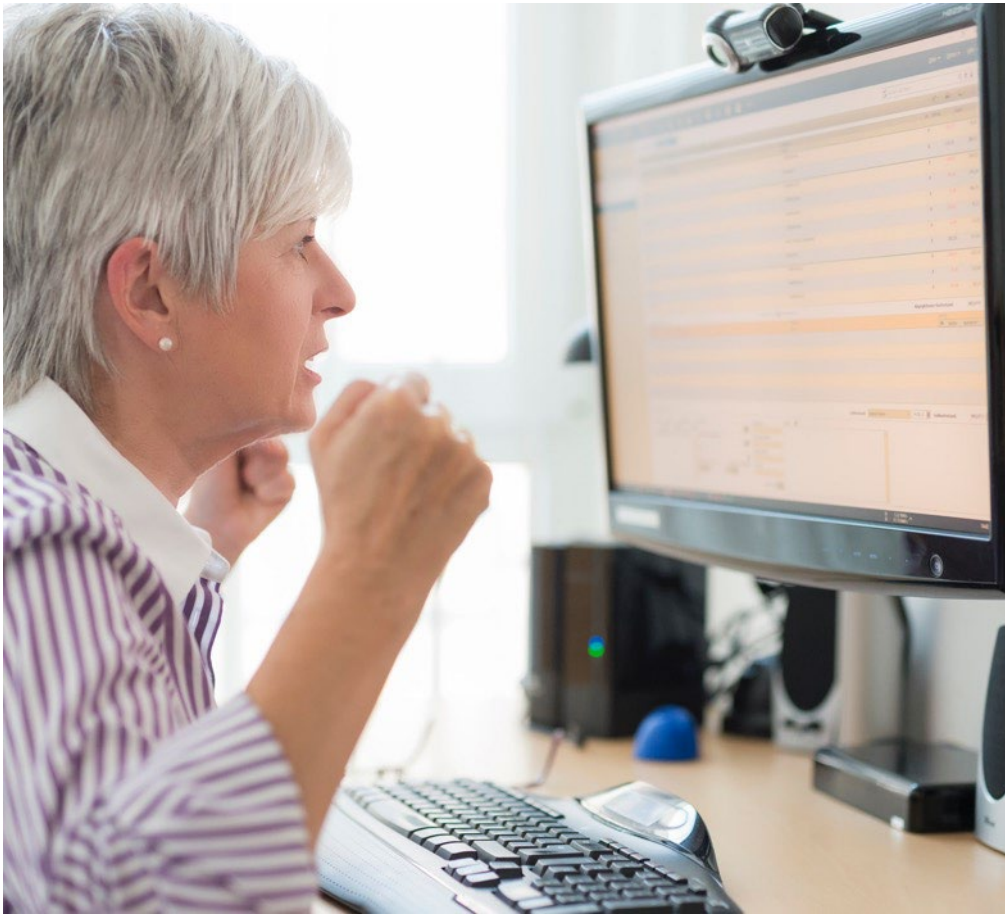
- Take or teach a class
- Learn a new language, dance or musical instrument
- Try complex arts and crafts
- Play challenging card or board games





# Manage Stress

## Pillar 3



## **Pillar 3.**

# **Manage Stress**

- Exercise regularly
- Smile and laugh
- Distract yourself with music and reading
- Seek out green spaces





**What do you do to manage stress?  
Share your tips**



## Pillar 3. Manage Stress

- Confide in friends
- Be silent and still
- Take stretch breaks
- Limit screen time
- Take deep breaths



# Ongoing Exercise

## Pillar 4

## Pillar 4. Ongoing Exercise

- Get a least 150 minutes of exercise each week
- Physical activity helps:
  - Increase circulation
  - Reduce anxiety and improve sleep
  - Reduce the risk of diabetes, heart disease, depression and stroke

*Talk to a health care provider before you start a new exercise program.*



**What are some ways you move and  
get exercise?  
Share your tips**

# Pillar 4. Ongoing Exercise



## Get Active

- Walking
- Dancing, Running, Biking
- Strength Training
- Tai Chi, Yoga



# **Restorative Sleep**

Pillar 5



**What do you do to sleep better?  
Share your tips**



# Pillar 5. Restorative Sleep

## Sleep Better

Get enough sleep

- 7-8 hours in a 24-hour period

Practice good sleep techniques

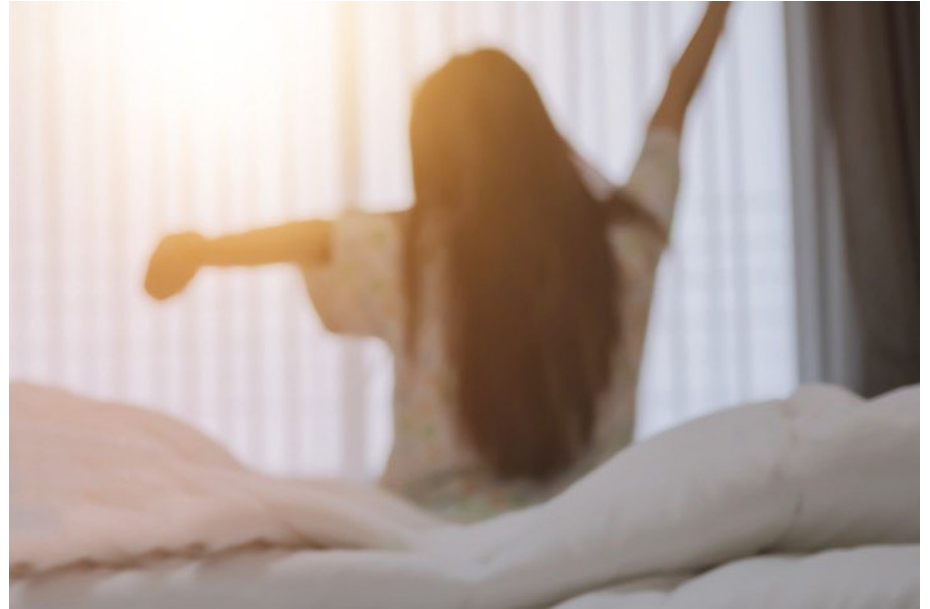
- Maintain a regular sleep-wake schedule
- Expose yourself to outdoor light during the day

Accept changes

- Sleep is more easily interrupted
- The body's internal clock shifts

## Pillar 5. Restorative Sleep

- Adjust caffeine intake
- Keep pets that disturb sleep out of the bedroom
- Restrict fluids and food three hours before going to bed
- Keep smartphones, TVs, electronics, out of the bedroom





# **Eat Right.**

Pillar 6

# Pillar 6. Eat Right

## Consider How Diet Affects Brain Health

- Eat less meat, salt and sweets
- Instead, choose more:
  - Fish and seafood
  - Nuts
  - Grains
  - Beans
  - Leafy green vegetables
  - Healthy fats like olive oil





**What do you eat as part of a  
brain-healthy diet?  
Share your tips**

# Pillar 6. Eat Right

## Foods that May Support Brain Health

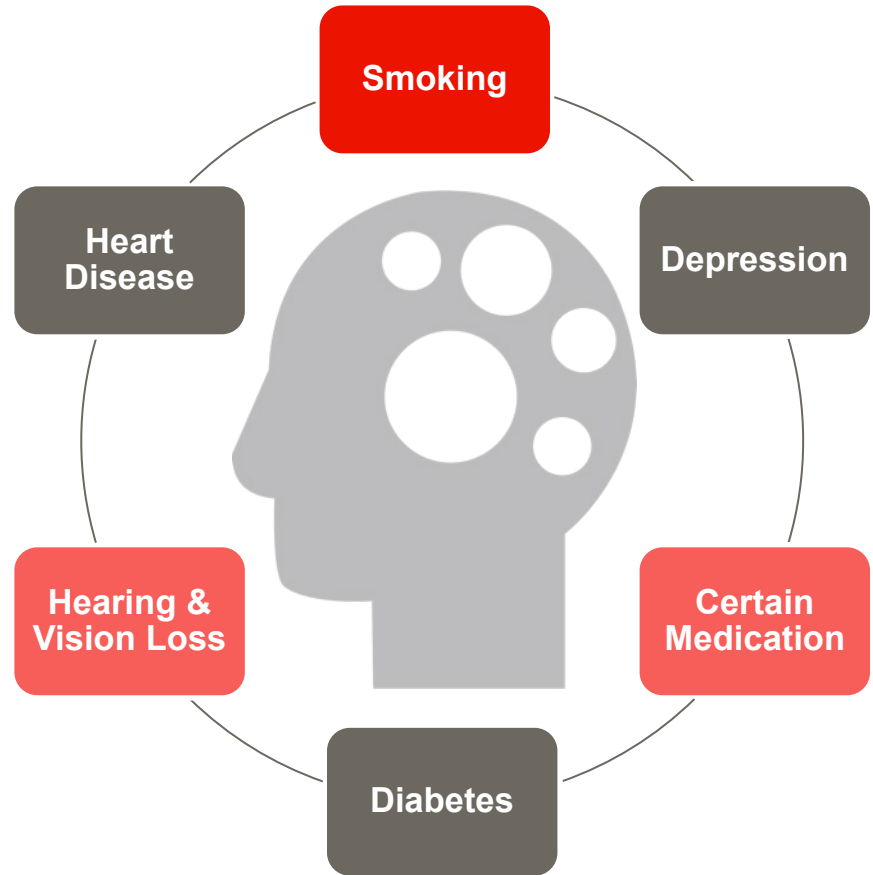
- Kale, spinach and broccoli
- Whole berries
- Vinegar, lemon, herbs and spices
- Salmon and sardines
- Walnuts and almonds





# **Risks or Threats to Brain Health**

## Risks or Threats to Brain Health





# Tips That May Help with Focus



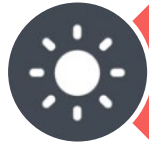
**Establish a routine**



**Pay attention**



**Avoid multitasking**



**Take breaks**



**Use calendars,  
reminders and alarms**

# Living a Lifestyle That Incorporates The Six Pillars of Brain Health

Be mentally, physically and socially active with special attention to diet, better sleep and stress reduction

- Upon waking?
- In the morning?
- At lunch?
- Early afternoon activity?
- Late afternoon?
- Dinner?
- Evening hours?


# What Can You Do Today?

- Is there something you want to change about your lifestyle?
- Think of small, first steps such as:
  - Take a 10-minute walk
  - Add one serving of vegetables
- Write down what you will do and when
- Get support from family, friends or community groups

# Resources

HEALTH  
**Brain Health & Wellness**

Conditions · Brain Games · Global Council on Brain Health · Staying Sharp



**Read the Global Council on Brain Health Report**  
The rich potential of music to promote brain health

**Music, the Brain And Staying Sharp**  
Learn about the powerful connection between music and the brain and its impact on memory and focus

**The Power of Music on the Brain**  
An important new report from AARP's brain health experts

**Discover How to Disrupt Dementia**  
Funding research for the cure

[aarp.org/brainhealth](https://aarp.org/brainhealth)



**Staying Sharp**

[stayingsharp.aarp.org](https://stayingsharp.aarp.org)

Global Council on  
**Brain Health**<sup>™</sup>  
A COLLABORATIVE FROM AARP

[globalcouncilonbrainhealth.org](https://globalcouncilonbrainhealth.org)

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**Staying Sharp**



## Conclusion

- Six Pillars of Brain Health
- Brain Health Risks
- Tips for Improving Memory
- Brain Health Day
- Personal Commitment
- Resources



**Thank You**  
for Joining Us!

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