



AWARENESS

BOOST YOUR MEMORY

Forty-four million people worldwide have Alzheimer's, a progressive brain disorder that affects the brain's ability to perform many of its tasks and often causes a slow decline in memory, thinking and reasoning ability, according to *Alzheimer's in Action*.

During the advanced stages of the disease, a person with Alzheimer's may not remember familiar places, things, and people, including loved ones.

Around the world, research is being conducted to try and find a cure for this debilitating disease, but until such time, we can all make every effort to minimise the risk.

What you do today can determine what you remember tomorrow

There's no way to guarantee that you will not develop Alzheimer's, however certain habits and lifestyle changes can help boost your memory and minimise the risk. According to Healthline evidence-based citations, these include:

- Exercise – regular physical activity has been shown to support the development of neurons that support memory and cognitive performance across all age groups. Try and get about 30 minutes of moderately vigorous exercise three or four times per week.
- Sleep enough – improving the quality of your sleep has been linked to preventing the risks of Alzheimer's. Sleep experts recommend adults get between seven and nine hours of sleep each night for optimal health.

- Eat less sugar – studies have shown that a sugar-laden diet, including refined carbohydrates like cakes, white bread, cereals and white rice, can lead to poor memory and reduced brain volume, particularly in the area of the brain that stores short-term memory.
- Eat more fish or take supplements – Fish and fish oil supplements are rich in the omega-3 fatty acids EPA and DHA. Studies have shown that consuming them may help improve short-term, working and episodic memory, especially in older people.
- Make time for meditation – practicing meditation and mindfulness are effective techniques for lowering stress and improving concentration and memory.
- Limit alcohol consumption – Alcohol has neurotoxic effects on the brain, including reducing memory performance. Occasional moderate drinking isn't an issue, but binge drinking can damage your hippocampus, a key area of your brain associated with memory.
- Train your brain – playing brain games can be a fun and effective way to boost your memory. Crosswords, word-recall games, scrabble and even mobile apps.

A gentle reminder

Although there is no sure-fire way to ensure that Alzheimer's can be prevented, it does seem that a healthier lifestyle, particularly paying attention to diet and exercise, can have a major impact on memory too.