

A Guide to Healthy Aging



What You Should Do

Physical Exercise

It has been proven that exercise is the most powerful intervention in improving cognition in older adults. Staying physically fit helps improve cognitive function by improving the ability to shift quickly between tasks, plan an activity and ignore irrelevant information.

- **Endurance:** Exercises like brisk walking, dancing or hiking improve the health of your heart, lungs and circulatory system. They can make daily activities easier, such as climbing a flight of stairs.
- **Strength:** Strength training—like lifting weights or using resistance bands—can increase muscle strength and help with everyday activities like carrying groceries.
- **Balance:** Balance exercises, such as standing on one leg or doing tai chi, can make it easier to walk on uneven surfaces and help

prevent falls.

- **Flexibility:** Stretching exercises can help your body stay flexible. They give you more freedom of movement for daily activities, such as bending to tie your shoes.

How much exercise is healthy?

Exercising 30 minutes a day for 3 or 4 days a week is recommended in moderate or vigorous intensity.

- **Moderate intensity:** Activities such as brisk walking are moderate intensity activities. An increased heart beat and breathing harder than normal are signs of a moderate intensity activity. Individuals can talk, but not sing, during the activity.
- **Vigorous intensity:** Individuals will feel these as being much faster and harder than normal (example: jogging). They cannot say more than a few words without pausing for a breath

The combination of a Mediterranean diet and physical exercise with social engagement—and keeping mentally active—is more effective than any of these factors alone.



For more useful information, visit www.pennmemorycenter.org



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For more information, email Research@flhealth.gov or

Contact your local County Health Department:



Additional resources may also be found by visiting:

<http://www.floridahealth.gov/provider-and-partner-resources/research/HealthyBrainInitiative1/index.html>