



# 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.

AARP is not responsible for the consequences of any decisions or actions taken in reliance upon or as a result of the information provided during this event.



## Good News

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





## Agenda

### **Six Pillars of Brain Health**

1. Engage Your Brain
2. Stay Socially Engaged
3. Manage Stress
4. Exercise
5. Get Restorative Sleep
6. Eat Right

# Importance of Brain Health

## Why is brain health more important than ever?

- Extended life expectancy
- Rethinking retirement
- Skyrocketing health care costs
- Current brain research



# Engage Your Brain

Pillar 1

# Pillar 1. Engage Your Brain



## Learn New Things

- Stay curious
- Pursue new interests
- Challenge your thinking



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



# Pillar 1. 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





# Be Social

Pillar 2



## Pillar 2. Be Social



### Stay Socially Engaged

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

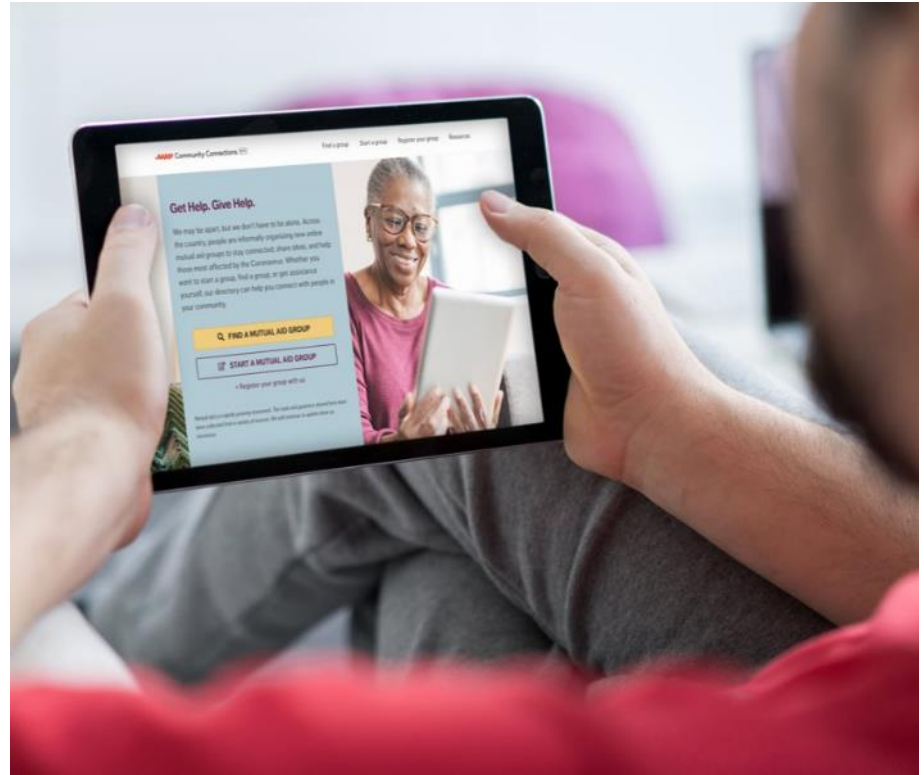


**How are you staying socially  
engaged?  
Share your tips**

# Pillar 2. Be Social

## Get Involved

- Organize a regular virtual game night or book club
- Attend virtual community events
- Consider adopting a pet or pet sitting
- Volunteer



# AARP Resources for Connection

## Create the Good: Volunteer Opportunities

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

## 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

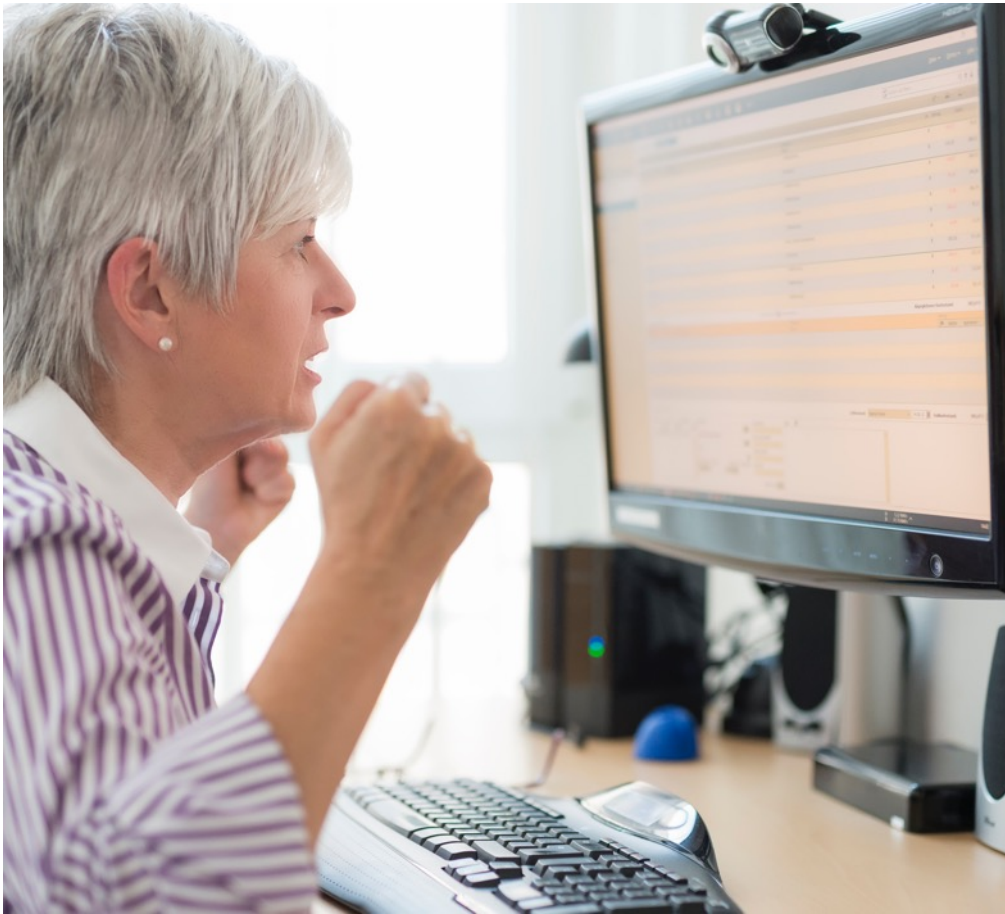






# Manage Stress

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:
  - Repair and protect brain chemicals
  - 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

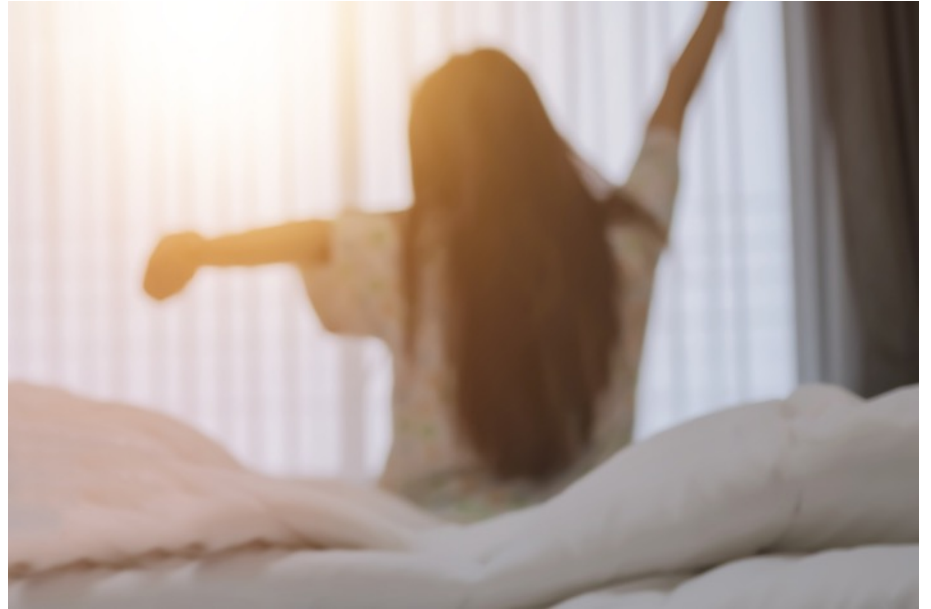
- Maintain a regular sleep-wake schedule
- Expose yourself to outdoor light during the day

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 and electronics out of the bedroom





**Eat Right.**

Pillar 6



# Pillar 6. Eat Right

## Eat a Brain-Healthy Diet

- Eat less meat and sweets
- Consume more:
  - Fish and Seafood
  - Nuts
  - Grains
  - Beans
  - Leafy green vegetables
  - Olive Oil





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

# Pillar 6. Eat Right

## Brain-Healthy Foods

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

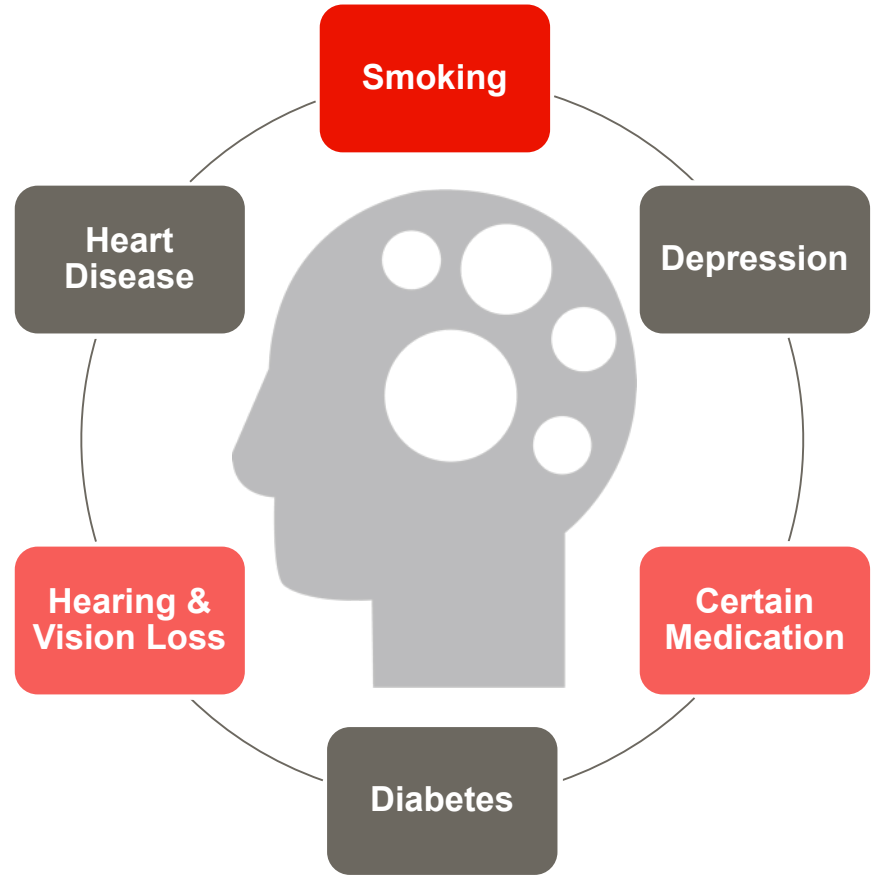






# Risks or Threats to Brain Health

# Risks or Threats to Brain Health





# Tips for Improving Memory



Establish a routine



Pay attention



Avoid multitasking



Take breaks



Use calendars,  
reminders and alarms

# Live a Lifestyle That Supports 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?

- Pick one thing you can do that would support your brain health
- Think of small, first steps such as:
  - Take a 10-minute walk
  - Add one serving of vegetables
  - Make an appointment for a health screening or physical exam
- 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)

**Global Council on Brain Health**  
A COLLABORATIVE FROM AARP

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



**Empowering you to take control of your Brain Health.**

Did you know research shows lifestyle behaviors may have the biggest impact on brain health? Add Staying Sharp to your AARP membership and learn about healthy habits to support brain health.

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



## Conclusion

- Six Pillars of Brain Health
- Brain Health Risks
- Tips for Improving Memory
- What You Can Do Today
- Resources

# Keep in Touch with Us

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[Twitter.com/AARPVa](https://twitter.com/AARPVa)





**Thank You**  
for Joining Us!

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