

Eight ways to keep up a brain that's GREAT

DID YOU KNOW?...

1. Say **NO** to **DRUGS**. The use of drugs, even in small amounts or during a small period of time, can damage your brain in an irreversible way. That means that even 10, 20 or still 30 years after stopping the use of drugs your brain may not be fully recovered.

Be smart. Say NO.

2. Thank you for **NOT SMOKING**. Smoking is not only bad for your lungs, it is also terrible for your brain. A healthy brain needs oxygen to work properly; cigarette smoke limits the amount of oxygen that reaches your brain and also increases the amount of CO₂ (which is a poison for your brain cells). It will also make the veins of your brain to become brittle and break more easily, increasing the risk of stroke and other types of brain damage.

Use your brain. Say NO.

3. **DON'T DRINK ALCOHOL**. Alcohol is another type of poison that will make irreversible damage to your brain. It will make you become anxious, depressed, lose your memory, have problems controlling your body movements and even produce dementia later in life.

Be clever. Say NO.

4. Eat **HEALTHY FOODS**. Believe it or not, a growing brain needs fats and sugars to be healthy (...that doesn't mean that is good to eat a pint of chocolate ice cream every day!) A healthy and balanced diet full of fruits, vegetables, legumes, nuts and fish will provide all the vitamins and minerals that your brain needs to be as sharp as an arrowhead.

5. **EXERCISE**. 1...2...1...2... C'mon, move your bones and shake that body! Exercise, dancing and other outdoors activities will make your blood circulate and bring that precious oxygen to every little cell of your brain. Do you want to be the proud owner of a bunch of happy neurons? Dedicate **20 minutes** of your day to exercise, if you don't mind...

6. **FEED YOUR MIND**. Going to school is not enough for you to become Mr. or Ms.

Smarty pants. Your mind craves puzzles, thinking games, challenges... (Sorry, but watching TV and video games don't really count). Reading for pleasure (yeah, it's possible), playing thinking games such as chess, connect 4, hangman, or learning to play a musical instrument or another language will keep your brain in the edge. **Think about it!**

7. **GOOD NIGHT!** Did you know that your brain is most active when you sleep? When you sleep your brain takes the opportunity to review, organize and store all the information that you accumulated during the day. A good night sleep will help you to improve your memory waking up refreshed... and smarter! (Pajama parties are great every once in a while, but **8-10 hours** of sleep every night are best).

8. **SAFETY FIRST**. Blows on the head can be very dangerous causing permanent damage to the brain (or even death). Although our brain is nicely protected by the skull and cushioned by the CSF fluid, this protection is not perfect. **Use your head** and **WEAR A HELMET** every time you play sports such as baseball or football, when you ride your bike, go skating, wall climbing or do any other activities that may imply the risk of head trauma. Also, **ALWAYS** fasten your seatbelt when riding in a car.

Babies born from smoking mothers:
Tend to be smaller.
Tend to have more learning disabilities.
Tend to have more hyperactivity and ADD related problems.

Alcohol is such a poisonous substance that it causes brain damage and physical malformations to babies if the mothers drink while being pregnant.



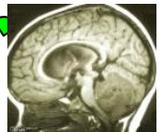
Children who play a musical instrument are better at Math and in general do better on the SATs and other standardized tests.

PUZZLES

Do you know who is at the top of the **risk-list** for head injury?

People of **ages 15-24** who drive motor vehicles, ride bikes or play sports.

your brain
(a healthy one)



Homer's brain
(Duh!)



Don't be nuts...



IT WILL SAVE YOUR LIFE

