

A monthly wellness newsletter from Better You

## Keep Your Brain Healthy

Weighing in at less than 4 pounds, the human brain is a mighty little organ, responsible for keeping our entire body functioning day in and day out. That's why it's so critical to keep it in tip-top shape.

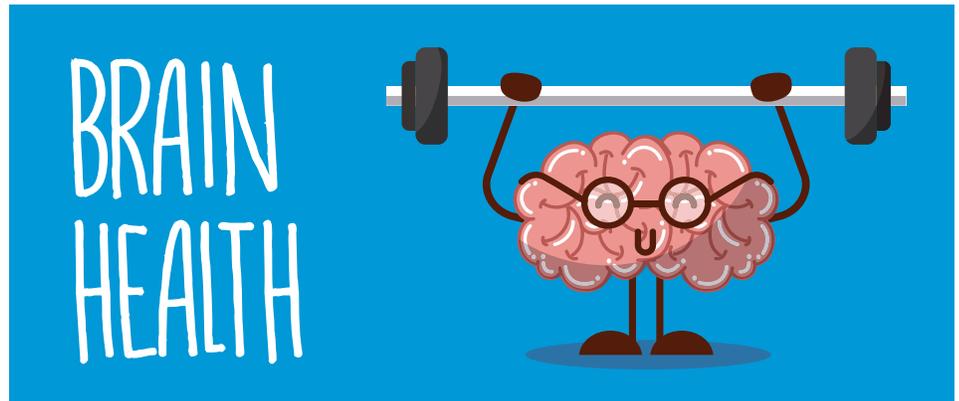
The good news is we can promote brain health at any age. By practicing a healthy lifestyle, we store up our "brain reserve," which helps guard against diseases like Alzheimer's and dementia. Read on for suggestions on how to keep your brain young and fit!

### Get moving

With every resting heartbeat, your brain gets 25% of the oxygen and nutrient-rich blood your heart pumps. Moving at least 30 minutes a day gets your heart rate up and circulates the oxygenated blood to nourish your brain and remove toxins. Try:

- Walking briskly or running
- Biking
- Skating
- Dancing
- Playing a game of tag with the kids

Resource: [paulnussbaum.com](http://paulnussbaum.com)



### Think more

Stimulate your brain with mental tasks that are new and complex for you. Try:

- Learning a new language
- Traveling to new places
- Playing a musical instrument
- Playing board games
- Developing hobbies

### Connect with others

Humans have a basic need to belong to a group and form relationships. Social isolation increases your risk for dementia. Try:

- Building a network of new friends
- Strengthening family bonds
- Relying on forgiveness
- Retiring from work, not from life

### Eat better

Food fuels our body's everyday processes and movements, and the quality and quantity of what you eat impacts brain health. Try:

- Consuming more essential nutrients (omega-3 fatty acids and antioxidants)
- Eating less saturated and trans fat
- Eating smaller serving sizes

### Be mindful

Finding balance and peace can help you connect with who you are and what you value most. Try:

- Learning deep breathing techniques
- Incorporating meditation into each day
- Learning yoga

No matter how old you are, it's always a good time to begin practicing a healthy lifestyle. Take care of your brain, and it will take care of you.

# Stuck in an Exercise Rut? Think Outside the Box

Do you find yourself walking miles and miles on a treadmill at the gym? You're checking exercise off the to-do list but bored out of your mind? Whether you're planning a vacation or a staycation, start thinking of exercise as play instead of as another chore to check off your to-do list. Think

of every movement as a way to burn calories and stay fit.

## On your staycation, you can:

1. Visit a local theme park and log your steps.
2. Explore the nature trails at a nearby state or national park.
3. Go for a long swim at one of Florida's natural springs.
4. Try your hand at paddle boats, kayaking, windsurfing or stand-up paddle boarding (SUP).

## On your vacation, you can:

1. Rent a bike and explore a new city.



2. Go scuba diving.
3. Take a kayaking tour through the mangroves.
4. Plan a trip around hiking trails in national parks across the U.S.

Resource: [Webmd.com](http://Webmd.com)

# Salmon Cakes

Crab cakes are a popular dish, but they're not always practical or affordable. This quick and easy recipe uses salmon and other ingredients that can be kept on hand for preparation on busy days. Salmon is rich in omega-3 essential fatty acids, which are so important for brain function.

## Ingredients:

- 1 7.5-ounce can salmon, skin removed
- ¼ cup plain, dry bread crumbs
- ½ cup finely chopped red onion
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh dill, or 1 teaspoon dried



- 1 egg, lightly beaten
- 1 tablespoon reduced-fat mayonnaise
- 2 teaspoons horseradish
- Vegetable oil cooking spray

## Directions:

1. Mix all the ingredients except the cooking spray in a medium-size bowl.

2. Form into 4 equal-size patties.
3. Coat a medium nonstick pan with the cooking spray; heat over medium heat.
4. Cook the salmon cakes on both sides until golden brown.

**Note:** Chili sauce may be used instead of horseradish. This is an easy and inexpensive way to reel in omega-3s, fish fat with anti-inflammatory properties that also may help fight heart disease.

Recipe and photo courtesy of [Eatright.org](http://Eatright.org). For nutritional information [click here](#).

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