
YOUR
AMAZING
BRAIN
Brain
Health
Scotland
Your brain is amazing.
Let's keep it that way.
www.brainhealth.scot

Brain Health Scotland

Many factors can affect the health of your brain as you go through life – some of these things you can't control, but others you can influence by making positive lifestyle changes.

At Brain Health Scotland, we want to empower you to stay healthy and reduce the risk of diseases that can lead to dementia.

This guide will highlight key areas that you can address. Use it to help you take control and make your own personal brain health pledges.



Stay Connected



Switch Off



Take Care



Reduce Risks



Move More



Eat Well

Get started building your personalised plan by completing the online quiz at: **brainhealth.scot/quiz**



Stay Connected

Your brain thrives on company and benefits from the stimulation of being with other people. We also know that if you continue to learn, and challenge yourself mentally throughout life, you can build your brain's resilience.



Picking up new skills and hobbies helps too. Be creative. Learning a language or a musical instrument is a great way to stay sharp.

Try a new activity in a group, or with a friend, to keep motivated while also getting that added social benefit.



Switch Off

Long-term stress can harm the brain and make it harder to keep on top of the other factors that are key to keeping our brain healthy. So make time for yourself, and the things that help you switch off and relax.

Take steps to protect your sleep. Your brain cleans itself while you sleep, flushing out waste products that build up throughout the day.

Aim for **7–9 hours** of good quality sleep every night. Not getting enough sleep can affect your memory and ability to think in the short and long term.

Access practical advice and tips for improving your sleep routine. See **thesleepcharity.org.uk**

Take Care

Some medical conditions can have a knock-on effect on your brain's wellbeing.

Among them are those that affect blood supply, including diabetes, high blood pressure and high cholesterol.



Conditions that might leave us feeling socially isolated, such as hearing loss, vision loss, and depression can have an impact too – as can a history of head injury.

Monitor your overall health with regular check-ups. Pick up on any concerns early, follow medical advice closely and take any medications as prescribed.

Reduce Risks

Smoking causes damage to the blood vessels that supply the brain, interrupting the delivery of vital oxygen and nutrients. Stopping smoking – even later on in life – can reduce the risk of developing dementia.

Get help to stop smoking at **quityourway.scot**



You don't need to avoid alcohol completely, but exceeding the recommended weekly limits can damage the brain and increase your risk.

Calculate your weekly units at **count14.scot**

Air pollution particles can reach your brain through your lungs – and it's not just outdoor air quality, there are also things you can do to have cleaner air indoors.



Move More

Being physically active is one of the best things you can do to boost brain health. Regular exercise helps maintain a good blood supply to the brain, improves mental wellbeing and promotes good quality sleep.

There are lots of ways you can become more active. Whatever works for you, aim to complete at least **2-3 hours** of moderate intensity exercise every week.

What counts as 'moderate exercise'?

BRISK WALKING GARDENING
RIDING A BIKE DANCING





Eat Well

Making good food choices can help ensure your brain gets the nutrients it needs.

Your diet is also vital for maintaining a healthy weight and avoiding conditions such as high blood pressure and diabetes, which can affect brain health.

Research shows that following a Mediterranean-style diet benefits your brain. Rich in olive oil, it includes:

LOTS OF: vegetables, fruit, beans, fish and wholegrains.

NOT TOO MUCH: meat and sweet, sugary foods.

Scan here & discover more

Never too early.
Never too late.

Take your next step toward better brain health.

Visit us

Pop into your local Brain Health & Dementia Resource Centre.
Find your nearest centre at: **brainhealth.scot/centres**

Anyone can drop in – no matter your age – for a friendly chat and support. We'll help you create a simple, personalised brain health action plan to fit your lifestyle.

STARS: My Amazing Brain

Fun brain health learning for families.
In this free programme, 8–12 year olds discover how to keep their brains healthy through animations, games and hands-on activities – imagining their brains full of shining stars!

Parents and carers can join in too with our 3-Week Brain Health Challenge – simple daily tips for boosting brain health at home.

Ask your child's teacher to use it in school, or try it together at home.
brainhealth.scot/stars

Brain Health at work

Our new Workplace Programme is coming soon.
We're launching a practical, high-impact programme to help organisations create brain healthy workplaces – supporting focus, wellbeing and long-term brain health.

Sign up now to be the first to hear when it launches:
brainhealth.scot/workplace

Join Dementia Research

Be part of something bigger.
Help scientists learn more about brain health and disease. You don't need a diagnosis – anyone can volunteer.

Get involved today at: **www.joindementiaresearch.nihr.ac.uk**

Keep in touch

Get monthly tips to boost your brain health.
Sign up to our newsletter for easy lifestyle tips and the latest from our team at: **brainhealth.scot**

Brain Health Scotland

GET INSPIRATION AND PERSONALISED TOP TIPS BY COMPLETING THE ONLINE QUIZ:

brainhealth.scot/quiz



Get started

Make pledges that are realistic and measurable. Try setting your goals with someone else to help make them fun and keep you motivated.

Sharing your pledges – and your progress – will help you succeed! Fill in these pages with your own pledges to achieve better brain health. Cut them out and put them where you will see them. This will remind you what you want to achieve!

And always keep your pledges simple:

I WILL improve my diet

HOW by swapping meat for fish

WHEN three times a week

WHERE at home

WITH my husband, John

PLEDGE

I WILL

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Notes

Alzheimer Scotland | Brain Health Scotland

Brain Health Scotland is an initiative by Alzheimer Scotland to promote brain health and reduce the risk of dementia in Scotland.

Alzheimer Scotland is Scotland's national dementia charity. Our aims are Prevent, Care, Cure and our mission is to make sure nobody faces dementia alone. We provide support and information to people with dementia, their carers and families, campaign for their rights and fund vital dementia research. Find out more about our work at **alzscot.org** and **brainhealth.scot**

Brain Health Scotland is an initiative by Alzheimer Scotland.

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It is recognised as a charity by the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator SC022315