

Your Mind Matters

Preserve Your Brain Health for Your Best Life



FEATURED ARTICLE

Yoga is Good for Your Brain

September is *National Yoga Awareness Month*. So, let's talk about the brain-healthy benefits of this ancient practice.

Many people practice yoga to relieve stress and lessen physical pain, but one [*study](#) suggests that it can also be a valuable part of a brain-healthy lifestyle. Even just one to two sessions a week may be enough to start reaping those benefits.

The study showed that yoga can improve memory, attention and cognitive performance by having a positive effect on the brain regions responsible for these skills.

The study also showed that yoga helps us to improve our ability to regulate our emotions through mindfulness, improving our mood and relieving our stress and anxiety, all of which gives us the resilience to cope with adversity more effectively.

Although there are many types of yoga, the study indicates that *Hatha* yoga is the most beneficial as it combines physical movements and poses with breathing exercises and meditation. These three elements together appear to impact the structure and function of the brain in a positive way.

So, join a yoga group, create a practice of your own or find a free guided yoga practice on YouTube. No matter how you do it, make it a part of your weekly self-care routine and an enjoyable way to take another step forward in your brain health journey.

By Marilyn Abrahamson - Brain-Health Education Specialist at Ceresti Health.

TAKE CARE OF YOU

Seeing Life Through a Positive Lens

We all have moments when we look at life as if it were a *glass half-empty*.

As a human being, it's normal to have bad days - focusing less on your blessings and more on what's lacking from your life.

Acknowledging your feelings without judgment can give you the resilience and the presence of mind to choose your thoughts more mindfully going forward.

Focus on the positive.

Train your mind to focus more on the positive by engaging in tasks that force you to seek those thoughts out. This is important because negativity can seem glaring, and if you're not mindful, negative thoughts are more likely to occupy your mind than positive ones.

One of the most effective ways to do this is to keep a gratitude journal. It doesn't have to be formal - a simple notebook or writing pad will do the job. In your journal, you can simply write down anything positive that comes to mind. Once you have it down on paper, you can close your eyes and focus on that thought until you feel more calm and happy. You can also refer to these journal entries whenever you need a lift.

Try to add an entry to your journal every day. Keep in mind that some days will be more difficult than others - not every day will offer your choice of happy thoughts to write down, but little things count too. A warm, beautiful day or hearing a funny joke can be little sparks of joy - even if they're fleeting. Acknowledge these little things and accept them as small gifts for you to keep, because if you write them in your journal, you can return to them whenever you want to, just by reading through your journal entries.

This is how you can begin to alter your perspective over time - changing your daily experience from negative to a more positive experience.

BRAIN HEALTH MINUTE

GO GREEN

Studies show that green tea is a great way to improve health, but can also boost the health and wellness of your brain!

It's packed with antioxidants, it's been shown to lower blood pressure and cholesterol levels and helps stabilize blood sugar. All of this translates to a healthy body and a healthy heart... and *what's good for your heart is good for your brain!*

Green tea comes in flavors that range from peppermint to raspberry and jasmine, and you can even mix and match!.

So, now that autumn is upon us, brew a warm (or iced) cup of green tea for yourself right now and enjoy the brain-healthy benefits!

For more information about brain health or caregiver support please visit the **Ceresti Brain Health Education portal** at brainhealth.ceresti.com and enter code **GIVECARE**.

GROW YOUR BRAIN

Grow Your Brain at Mealtime

Let's light up some neglected brain pathways so you can grow your brain!

The loss of neural pathways throughout the brain causes the brain to shrink. This is one key reason we all experience age-related cognitive decline.

As we get older, we may engage in less challenging activities each day. We work less - or not at all. We go out less, we may even socialize less.

We also live more by routines - repetitive actions and sequences that allow us to think less, yet still accomplish our daily tasks. We can give our brains more of a challenge by cutting out the routines and doing things in new and different ways.

Mealtime has the potential to be an adventurous social event, but because we do it three times a day we've learned to make meals predictable and repetitive. Meatloaf on Mondays... chicken on Tuesdays... Fish on Wednesdays...etc. Always the same recipes, the same side dishes and the same conversation.

Here are four ideas to help you break out of what's expected and create more of the *unexpected* at mealtime.

- *Even if you make a similar dish, try a new recipe.* There's more than one way to make a meatloaf on a Monday! This time, try a recipe that's more complicated. This will light up neural pathways in your frontal lobe by challenging your planning and organization skills. Use unusual seasonings, and colorful, crunchy vegetables to wake up all of your senses.
- *See a different perspective at the table.* In most households, everyone usually has their own seat at the table. Switch seats to give you, and anyone else at the table a different view of the kitchen. You'd be surprised how interesting it can be to see that same room from a different perspective.
- *Turn off the television and other electronic devices during meals.* The art of conversation is gradually disappearing from the social scene. When distractions are eliminated, you'd be surprised how much easier it is to engage others at the table in conversation.
- *If you're dining alone, try to close your eyes and practice mindful eating.* Feel the texture and temperature and taste of your food, notice the sounds as you chew and swallow. You'll enjoy the nuances of subtle flavor and crunch that you may not otherwise notice.

Try some or all of these techniques and wake up your brain!

**All of the Neurobic exercises are taken from the book "Keep Your Brain Alive" by Dr. Lawrence Katz and Manning Rubin. Workman Publishing, New York.*



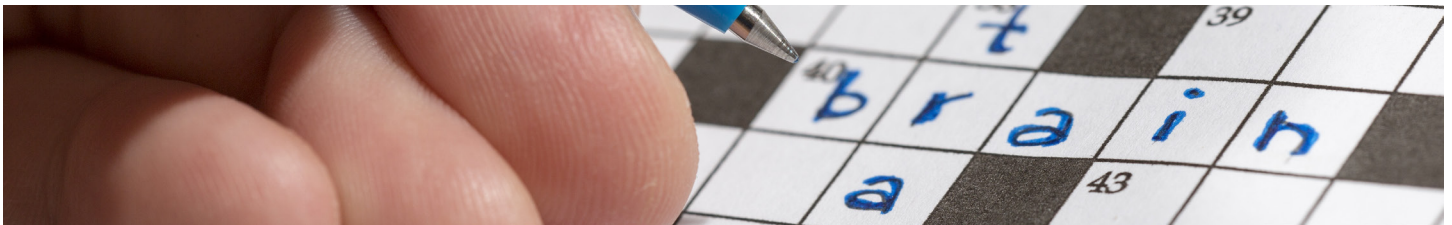


Norwell Executive Center
167 Washington Street
Norwell, MA 02061

As a supplemental benefit of your health plan, you have access to a caregiver support program available through Ceresti Health at no cost to you.
To determine if you are eligible for this program, contact: (877) 222-5055.

MONTHLY BRAIN CHALLENGE

Hink Pink



The clues offered below represent rhyming word pairs called **Hink Pink**. The first one is done for you and the answers are provided below if you need them.

1. Example: Oversized Feline (Answer: Fat Cat)
2. Better restaurant
3. Skinny baby horse
4. Licorice on the Beach
5. Humorous Hare
6. Greasy Bird
7. Wet Beagle
8. Oversized Toupee
9. Police Chief
10. Impolite Guy

ANSWERS	
1. Fat cat	5. Funny Bunny
2. Finer Diner	4. Sandy Candy
3. Bony Pony	3. Bony Pony
4. Sandy Candy	2. Finer Diner
5. Funny Bunny	1. Fat cat
6. Slick Chick	
7. Soggy Doggy	
8. Big Wig	
9. Top Cop	
10. Rude Dude	