

Optimizing Your Memory

To optimize your memory it is recommended that you pay attention to the tips below. Everyone is an individual, so not all the tips will apply to you. Try to select an area where you might improve, either by your own efforts, or with the help of your health care provider. Improvements will benefit both your memory and your overall health.

Manage Stress- Explore ways to reduce stress. Consider relaxation or meditation classes. Tai Chi or Yoga might help. Counseling may help.

Sleep Hygiene – Get a restful sleep consistently.

Factors to promote sleep include:

- Avoid caffeine late in the day or fluids just prior to bedtime
- Consciously relax 2 hours before bed
- Maintain a regular bedtime routine
- Maintain a sleep-wake schedule
- Avoid naps or keep them short
- Keep the bedroom temperature comfortable to promote sleep
- Practice relaxed breathing when you go to bed.

Manage Sleep Apnea- If you are diagnosed with sleep apnea, follow the treatment recommendations. If you suspect you might have sleep apnea, discuss assessment with your health care provider. Signs of sleep apnea include breathing that pauses or stops from seconds to minutes while you are sleeping. Pay attention to excessive snoring, excessive daytime drowsiness, or headaches upon awakening from sleep.

Stop Drinking Alcohol- Alcohol is a neurotoxin = Bad for your brain and memory. Discuss a plan with your health care provider.

Management of Vascular Risk Factors:

Stop Smoking- Smoking is bad for your heart and your brain. Your health care provider can help you with a plan.

Diabetes Control – Avoid hypoglycemia (low blood sugar level) or hyperglycemia (high blood sugar). If you are a person with diabetes, follow your health care provider's guidelines regarding the best blood glucose (sugar) level for you.

Manage Cholesterol- Discuss your cholesterol level (lipid or fat level) with your health care provider. Medication, diet and exercise can all help with management of your cholesterol level.

Manage Blood Pressure – Avoid blood pressure that is too high or too low. Discuss your target blood pressure with your health care provider.

Stroke Prevention - Maintain a healthy lifestyle that includes a healthy diet and regular physical exercise. These help with stroke prevention. Sometimes, medications may be indicated. Discuss your risks with your health care provider.

Research Participation:

In addition to optimizing your health, research participation may be an option you wish to consider. This can be discussed with the geriatrician at your appointment.