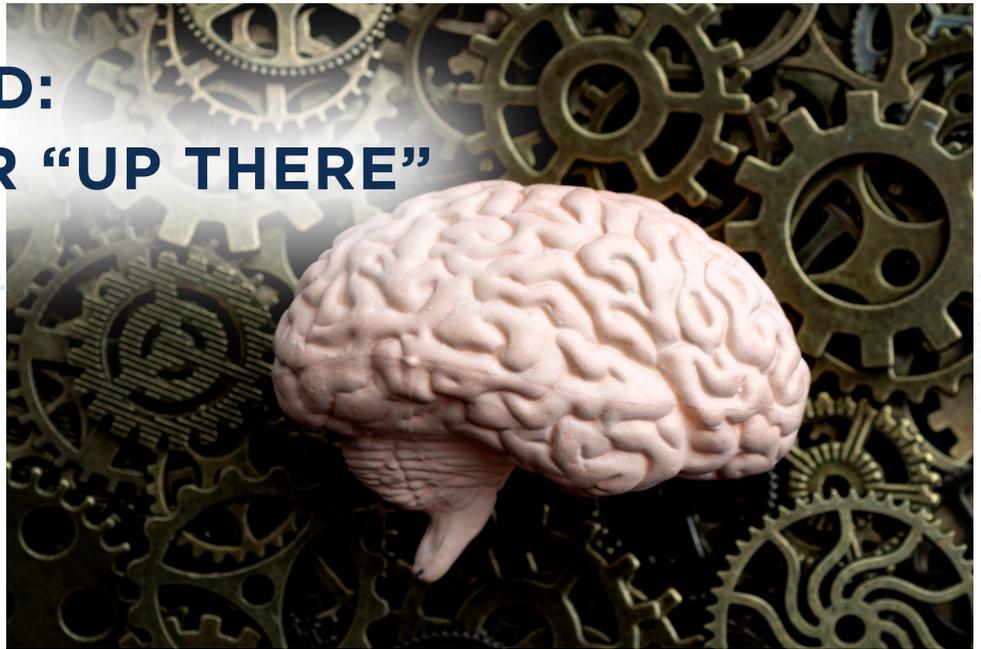




QUICKSILVER
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JOG YOUR MIND: EXERCISES FOR “UP THERE”

Fun, simple sessions that challenge your brain and connect its synapses are awesome at any age, but especially in mid-life and beyond when we start to experience those dreaded “senior moments.”



Not to worry — those are normal. Declining cognitive function is just a fact of life. But there is something that can help keep your head in the game longer: exercising the mind. Countless studies have shown a clear tie between those who keep their brains fit and a reduction in cognitive decline.

As you boost longevity genes and find some fresh energy to take on new tasks, you might consider making “brain sports” one of them. You can take on solo puzzles, engage a spouse or loved one in a little friendly competition, or involve the kids for some lighthearted family time. Get started here:

Analog Word Games

Crosswords are a classic brain sharpener. And once you get into the habit they can be super addicting. If you can't find time for crosswords during the week, look forward to a session each Sunday, or pull one from the paper and get the whole family in on the fun throughout the day. Scrabble is another word game that's easy to keep out on the coffee table and can stimulate mind and memory.



Tricks of the Trade

Humans like routine. But there's nothing that keeps the brain more intact than when things aren't exact. By intentionally "tricking" your brain with challenges throughout the day, you can make it both a "play" and a "puzzle" for your mind. Multiple mini challenges can help keep it sharp. Try one of these conundrums: drive a new route to work, school or errands; trigger a new neural pathway by washing the dishes (or doing any chore) with your eyes closed; or brush your teeth each night with your non-dominant hand.



Do Anything New

Brains thrive when you introduce novelty. Something new and complex is even better for the brain. But you do you. Pick up that guitar you've always wanted to learn — or any multisensory musical instrument will do. Try a new sport, mode of exercise, or doubly beneficial practice like meditation. Start a crafty hobby that stimulates the creative side of your brain. Or go big by learning a foreign language.

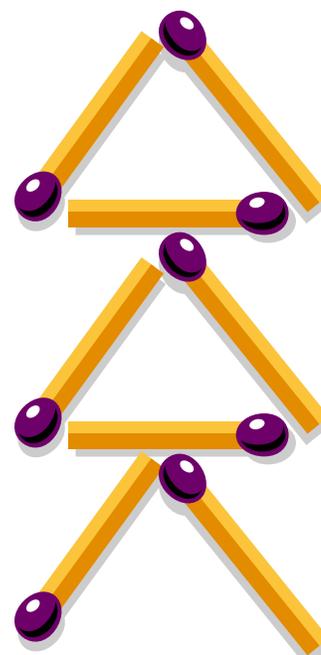


Logic Boosters

Any challenges or games that involve numbers or logical patterns jog the brain in a different way than the everyday. Simple starts include Sudoku, chess or checkers. You can also try doing basic math — even your checkbook — without a calculator. Tap your memory and recall — those elementary skills are probably still locked inside your head.

Daily Practices

There are all kinds of small steps you can take to make your brain process a little differently throughout the day, and, promise, it will love you for it. For example, when you meet someone new, repeat the name out loud. When you're reading the newspaper or novel, take some notes — or add



Move two matchsticks to make seven triangles

ideas or inspiration to a journal. There's a special connection between reading and manually writing. Actually picture the items on your grocery list to imprint the memory uniquely. Tell a story from your day at dinner. All of these things push your brain in new ways.

Stoke the Senses

Including new routines that stimulate other senses can do wonders for the mind, too. Ignite smell and taste by cooking some new cuisines with robust flavors from around the world. Savor your meals and experience the nuances of herbs and spices by slowing down and chewing 20 times before you swallow. Knitting, drawing, painting or observing art will stimulate those tactical connections and visual perceptions.



Prioritize Sleep

Getting enough shut-eye is important for every bodily function, including our brains. Our minds, so taxed by the modern world, need a chance to reset and get some REM. In fact, without undergoing the nightly chemical changes the body requires it will be hard to assimilate new information into long-term memory. Basically, all of the above won't get a chance to sink in.



Remember, the goal of any brain game is to fire those synapses more in new, harder or complex ways each day. Once you get the hang of it, exercising your brain will be like going for a walk.