AlphaNet

Brain Health

12/8/25

What is Brain Health?

- ✓ Brain health refers to how well your brain is functioning. Brain health influences how well you think, learn, and remember.
- ✓ Brain health can be supported by healthy habits such as regular physical activity, a balanced diet, good sleep routines, and staying mentally and socially engaged.
- ✓ Managing stress, maintaining social connections, and challenging your brain with new activities also contribute to better brain health.

Ways to Support Optimal Brain Health

- ✓ **Physical Health**
  - ❑ Keep chronic conditions like high blood pressure, diabetes, sleep apnea, and lung disease well managed.
  - ❑ Follow your healthcare providers' recommendations for routine checkups and medications.
- ✓ **Emotional Well-being and Sleep Quality**
  - ❑ Practice stress reduction activities such as deep breathing, meditation, or gentle stretching.
  - ❑ Maintain good sleep habits with a regular sleep schedule and a restful sleep environment.
- ✓ **Balanced Diet**
  - ❑ Choose meals that include fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean proteins, and healthy fats.
  - ❑ Limit foods high in sugar, salt, and saturated fats.
- ✓ **Physical Activity**
  - ❑ Aim for regular movement such as walking, cycling, swimming, or strength exercises.
  - ❑ Include activities that improve balance and flexibility, such as yoga (including chair yoga).
- ✓ **Cognitive and Social Engagement**
  - ❑ Stay mentally active through reading, puzzles, games, or learning new skills.
  - ❑ Keep social connections strong by talking with friends or family and joining group activities.

When to Talk to Your Healthcare Provider?

- ✓ Talk to your healthcare provider if you notice changes in thinking or memory, such as:
  - ❑ Trouble remembering recent events, appointments, or conversations.
  - ❑ Difficulty keeping track of daily tasks, managing medications, or following instructions.
- ✓ Talk to your healthcare provider if changes in mood or sleep begin to affect your daily functioning, for example:
  - ❑ Sadness, anxiety, or irritability interfere with your ability to engage in activities.
  - ❑ Sleep problems leave you feeling tired, confused, or less able to concentrate during the day.
  - ❑ Some medications for sleep or anxiety can affect memory. Talk to your healthcare provider if you think this may be happening.

Why is Brain Health Important for Alphas?

- ✓ Lung and liver conditions related to alpha-1 antitrypsin deficiency can affect energy levels, sleep, and overall well-being, which may also influence thinking and memory.
- ✓ Adequate oxygen levels are important for brain function. Low oxygen due to lung disease can contribute to difficulties with memory, attention, and thinking.
- ✓ Liver disease can sometimes lead to hepatic encephalopathy, where toxins build up in the blood and affect the brain. This can lead to sleepiness, slowed thinking, or even severe confusion.
- ✓ Supporting brain health helps you stay independent and engaged in daily life. Even small steps can improve overall well-being and quality of life.

Additional Resources

- ✓ A simple online tool that lets you check your memory with a brief screening is available at: https://portal-us.mocacognition.com/test-your-memory/
- ✓ Information about cognitive health and ways to support it are available at the websites listed below:
  - ❑ https://portal-us.mocacognition.com/cognitive-health
  - ❑ https://www.alz.org/help-support/brain_health
  - ❑ https://www.nia.nih.gov/health/brain-health