
WEEK EIGHT HANDOUT: STAYING ACTIVE



The more active we are, the less we are affected by illnesses. The evidence also suggests that having a healthier lifestyle may mean having a slightly better memory.

Physical exercise

Evidence shows that exercise helps people stay well for longer. Being physically active also helps to prevent depression and helps you feel well. You could take a short walk for 20 minutes every day, for example, walk a dog if you have one. You could also go out to play with grandchildren or exercise your upper body when sitting down.



Smoking

If you smoke, then try to cut this down.

Diet and nutrition

What we eat is important for how we feel. Good food also helps the body and the brain to work efficiently, so make sure you have enough of the good stuff.

- Eat five portions of fruit and vegetables every day.
- Eat “good” fat, such as oily fish and avocado, and less “bad” fat, such as red meat.



Mental activity

Keep your brain and mind active by doing various exercises and having fun playing games. This can, in turn, help you feel more confident and able. You could, for example:

- Read the newspaper/magazines
- Work on jigsaw puzzles
- Solve crossword puzzles and sudoku
- Play card or board games with your friends or family
- Find something to do every day that you feel good at
- Find something to do every day that you enjoy

Social activity

Research shows that people who are social and have lots of contact with other people are happier. Keeping in touch with close friends and family

regularly can also help your mind be active. This will, again, be beneficial to your well-being, confidence and abilities. You could, for example:

- ✓ Have a cup of tea or coffee with family, friends, neighbours or your church group if that is where you go
- ✓ Go to local support groups
- ✓ Go shopping and do other activities outside the home with other people
- ✓ Meet new people
- ✓ DEEP (<http://dementivoices.org.uk>) provides further information and opportunities to link up with others who have dementia
- ✓ Contribute to research – many people like the chance to contribute to research in dementia. If you want to do this, then the Join Dementia Research Register is a good place to start (www.joindementiaresearch.nihr.ac.uk/).