

Health *capsule*

Healthy brain

Today, Alzheimer's disease and related dementias affect more than **500,000 Canadians** and that number is expected to more than double in the next 25 years.

Supporting good brain function to keep diseases such Alzheimer's at bay or to slow their progression is gaining interest in the research community.

Research is showing that **physical activity** is beneficial for your brain health. Physical activity promotes the circulation of blood to the brain, which nourishes the cells with nutrients and oxygen, and may even encourage the development of new cells.

The **foods** you consume also appear to play an important role in protecting yourself against the development of Alzheimer's disease. It's recommended to have a diet rich in omega 3 fatty acids, such as salmon and flaxseed oil, brightly-colored fruits and vegetables that are high in antioxidants, vitamins C, D, and E, turmeric (used in curries) and garlic.

In addition to exercise and healthy eating, research also indicates that **challenging your brain and remaining socially active** can also provide protection against Alzheimer's disease.

Physical and mental exercises, and likely social interactions, help us by allowing for new connections to be made between nerve cells in the brain, by strengthening the ability of nerve cells to transfer messages, and through the recruitment of new nerve cells from the pool of primitive stem cells in the brain.

Heads
Up for
Healthier
Brains

January
is Alzheimer awareness month

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Our ability to retain life-long brain health is very much influenced by the **choices we make in our daily lives**. Research has found that outside of aging, the most influential factors in determining one's susceptibility to Alzheimer's disease are lifestyle and environmental factors. Therefore, it is very important to pay attention to our basic health and lifestyle choices:

- **Avoid harmful habits** such as smoking, recreational drug use and excessive alcohol consumption.
- **Be aware of your health** - keep your blood pressure, cholesterol, weight and blood sugar within recommended ranges.
- **See your doctor regularly**. Your doctor is an important partner in maintaining your health. Have regular checkups and address specific health concerns including diet and physical activity.
- **Get adequate sleep** - sleep deprivation can significantly impair your memory, mood and function.
- **Play games to challenge your mind** – chess, puzzles, crosswords and memory games.
- **Pursue a new interest** such as learning to play a musical instrument or learning another language.
- **Use a variety of stress reduction methods** (meditation, deep breathing, massage and physical exercise).

(Source : www.alzheimer.ca)

5/30 Health and Wellness Challenge

The 5/30 Health and Wellness Challenge invites Quebecers to take action for their health, enjoyably and with support, for 6 weeks, from March 1st to April 11. It offers a global approach to health that stresses the importance of taking care of your body and mind! It is an opportunity to take concrete steps to eat better, be more active and take good care of yourself.

By yourself, with your family or as a team, register at the following address:
www.defisante530equilibre.ca.

In signing up for the Health Challenge, you commit to achieving the following goals:

- eating at least 5 servings of fruits and vegetables a minimum of 5 days a week
- moving at least 30 minutes a minimum of 5 days a week
- improving your wellness by setting a goal of your choice from among the following: helping yourself sleep well, having some time for yourself, and managing your priorities

Take part in the Health Challenge to:

- get motivated to take action for your health
- take concrete steps to improve your lifestyle
- have more energy and feel good
- take advantage of free support
- be eligible to win one of many prizes (total value of more than \$20,000)

(Source: www.defisante530equilibre.ca)

**Register for the Health Challenge
before March 1st and
use the program in your daily life.**

PLEASE NOTE: THE « HEALTH CAPSULE » IS FOR INFORMATION PURPOSES ONLY AND IS NOT INTENDED TO PROVIDE MEDICAL ADVICE.

www.groupecenseo.com