

Cognitive Function in Seniors



Hello!

I am Giorgia!

I am here to discuss memory in seniors!

What I will discuss:

- What cognitive function is
- Signs of normal forgetfulness versus dementia
- How aging affects the brain
- Prevalence
- Risk factors
- Ways to help
- ACTIVITIES



What Is Cognitive function?



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Cognitive function is a broad term that refers to mental processes involved in learning and understanding information.

Cognitive Function



Cognitive functions include:

- Perception
- Memory
- Learning
- Attention
- Decision Making
- Language abilities

Cognitive Function Activities



Working memory:

For this activity we will be doing instant recall!
I am going to show you guys a series of pictures!
And we are going to see if you guys can remember
them once I have shown all 3!







Cognitive Function Activities



- What were the three images I showed you in the order I showed them to you?

Cognitive Function Activities



Selective attention:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IGQmdoK_ZfY
&t=2s&ab_channel=DanielSimons](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IGQmdoK_ZfY&t=2s&ab_channel=DanielSimons)

Signs of normal aging



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Age-related memory loss



- Making a bad decision once in a while
- Missing a monthly payment
- Forgetting what day it is and remembering it later
- Forgetting what word to use
- Losing things from time to time

Age-related memory loss

- They are not noticeably disrupting your daily life
- Not affecting your ability to complete daily tasks
- You don't have too much difficulty learning and remembering new things
- There's no underlying medical condition



Dementia



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10 Warning signs

- Disrupts daily life
- Challenges in planning or solving problems
- Difficulty completing familiar tasks
- Confusion with time or place
- Trouble understanding visual images and spatial relationships



10 Warning signs

- New problems with speaking or writing
- Misplacing things and losing the ability to retrace steps
- Decreased or poor judgement
- Withdrawal from work or social activities
- Changes in mood or personality



Normal Aging vs. Dementia



Normal Aging

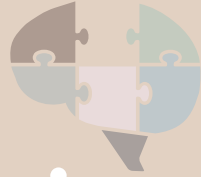
- Making a bad decision once in a while
- Missing a monthly payment
- Forgetting what day it is and remembering it later
- Forgetting what word to use
- Losing things from time to time

Dementia/ Alzheimer's disease

- Making poor judgement and decisions majority of the time
- Problems taking care of monthly bills
- Losing track of the date or time of year
- Trouble having a conversation
- Often misplacing things and being unable to find them

(National Institute of Health, 2018), (Alzheimer Society, 2021)

How aging affects the brain

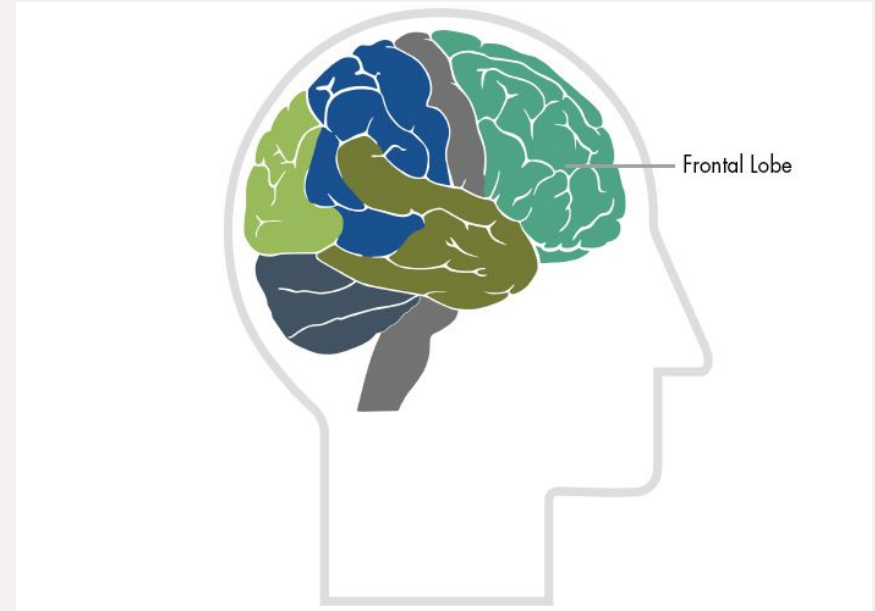


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How aging affects the brain

- Decline in executive function
- Executive function □ planning, problem solving, and working memory
- Decline is due to volume loss in frontal lobes as we age



Prevalence

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A decorative rectangular image on the right side of the slide. It features a dark, muted brown background. In the foreground, there are several stalks of dried reeds or grasses with light-colored, feathery heads. A large, white, serif-style number '5' is superimposed over the center of the image.

Prevalence

- 40% of us will experience some sort of memory loss after we turn 65
- 5 to 8% of people will live with dementia at some point
- For the most part memory loss is mild enough that we can continue our day to day lives



Risk Factors



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Risk Factors

- Stress
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Emotional distress □ death of relative, spouse, or friend
- Dealing with changes
- Social isolation



Ways to help

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Ways to help

- Taking care of your physical health
- Managing high blood pressure
- Eating healthy foods
- Staying physically active
- Stay connected with social activities
- Keeping your mind active



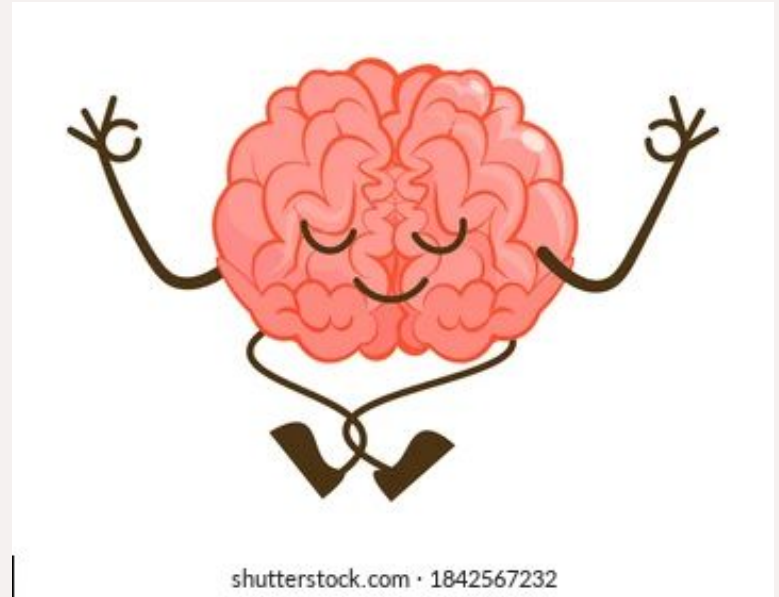
Brain Activities



- Puzzles
- Board games
- Card games □ solitaire, go fish, gin rummy, crazy 8s
- Bingo
- Scrabble
- Crossword Puzzles
- Word Searches

Brain Yoga

- Make a fist with your right hand and raise your thumb, hold this position
- Then, make a fist with your left hand and extend your pinkie finger
- Now try alternating between each hand



Brain Workout

- What word is spelled incorrectly in every dictionary?
- What travels the world while stuck in one spot?
- What has to be broken before you can use it?



Craft Time



Resources

Alzheimer's Association. (2021). *10 early signs and symptoms of Alzheimer's*.

https://www.alz.org/alzheimers-dementia/10_signs

Alzheimer Society. (2021). *The differences between normal aging and dementia*.

<https://alzheimer.ca/en/about-dementia/do-i-have-dementia/differences-between-normal-aging-dementia>

Kiely K.M. (2014) Cognitive Function. In: Michalos A.C. (eds) Encyclopedia of Quality of Life and Well-Being Research. Springer, Dordrecht. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-007-0753-5_426

National Institute of Health. (2018). *National institute on aging*.

<https://www.nia.nih.gov/health/do-memory-problems-always-mean-alzheimers-disease>



Resources

Read, S., Comas-Herrera, A., & Grundy, E. (2020). Social Isolation and Memory Decline in Later-life. *The Journals of Gerontology. Series B, Psychological Sciences and Social Sciences*, 75(2), 367–376. <https://doi.org/10.1093/geronb/gbz152>

Stephens, J. A., & Berryhill, M. E. (2016). Older Adults Improve on Everyday Tasks after Working Memory Training and Neurostimulation. *Brain Stimulation*, 9(4), 553–559. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.brs.2016.04.001>



Resources

Word searches

<https://www.rd.com/list/printable-word-search/>

Crossword puzzles

<https://www.onlinecrosswords.net/printable-daily-crosswords.php>

Riddles

<https://www.innovativeteachingideas.com/blog/50-riddles-to-challenge-your-students>



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