

## **Keep Your Memory Strong**

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Keeping an active mind is important to maintaining a strong memory into older age. Memory changes are a normal part of aging. Episodic memory, for example “Where did I park my car?” is the type of memory that declines with age. The good news is semantic memory can improve with age. This type of memory is our ability to recall general knowledge, such as vocabulary, and to carry out routine activities such as driving a car and cooking. Semantic memory can be maintained and enhanced by keeping an active mind. The following are recommendations for keeping your memory strong plus strategies to assist with episodic memory (APA, 2016).

Semantic memory can be improved by:

- Taking a class
- Learning a new skill
- Joining a book club
- Taking up a new hobby
- Challenging your brain with crossword and jigsaw puzzles (ALZ, 2016).
- Eating a healthy diet and staying active by exercising regularly enhances your memory by improving physical health and blood flow to the brain (APA, 2016).
- Volunteer work is a great way to keep the mind and body active.
- Participate in regular social activities with family and friends
- Sensory information is important in keeping the mind sharp. Be sure to get your eyes and ears tested regularly (APA, 2016).
- Keeping a positive attitude enhances memory capabilities!

Strategies to assist with episodic memory include:

- Keeping a calendar
- Making to-do lists
- Keeping frequently used objects in consistent places
- Establish routines (ALZ, 2016).

Minor memory changes are a normal part of aging, however, if you have concerns, or notice the following symptoms, contact your primary care provider:

- Getting lost in familiar places
- Repeatedly asking the same questions
- Forgetting important safety measures such as shutting the stove off
- Feeling confused
- Having trouble maintaining your finances (NIA, 2015).

## References

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