



5 things your doctor may not have told you about heart disease

(BPT) Every day your heart beats an estimated 100,000 times to move 2,000 gallons of blood through your body. That equates to more than 2.5 billion beats in your lifetime! It's no surprise heart health is a priority for many people, especially considering that heart disease is so common.

One in four deaths in the United States is caused by heart disease. More than 610,000 people die of heart disease in the U.S. every year, making it the leading cause of death for both men and women, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

You know you need to eat a nutritious diet, exercise and avoid smoking. However, there's a lot more you need to know to protect yourself and your family. Consider these five surprising things your doctor may not have told you about heart disease.

Heart disease can be caused by a genetic disorder

You may never heard of familial hypercholesterolemia (FH), a common, but inherited genetic disorder that causes heart disease. FH affects approximately one in 250 people worldwide, but currently 90 percent of people born with this genetic condition are not diagnosed. Individuals with FH have a high amount of low density lipoprotein (LDL) or "bad" cholesterol in their blood from birth. This lifelong burden of cholesterol is a major reason why FH leads to very early and severe heart disease. The good news is that FH is manageable if detected and treated early in life. If high cholesterol and early heart disease runs in your family, learn more at thefhfoundation.org.

Many heart attacks occur outside the hospital

About 47 percent of sudden cardiac deaths occur outside a hospital, according to the CDC. This suggests that many people with heart disease don't recognize or act on early warning signs.

Heart attacks have several major warning signs and symptoms:

Chest pain or discomfort. Upper body pain or discomfort in the arms, back, neck, jaw or upper stomach. Shortness of breath. Nausea, lightheadedness or cold sweats. Know the signs. Trust yourself. If you have any of these symptoms or sense something is just not right, call 911.



Many people think heart disease occurs in old age, but it can affect people of all ages.

Heart disease affects young people

Many people think heart disease occurs in old age, but it can affect people of all ages. Even if you or your family members are 30 years old or younger, you could be affected, especially if you have risk factors like high cholesterol or a family history of heart disease. Keep in mind, each child with a family member with FH has a 50 percent chance of inheriting the disorder, which is present since birth. Untreated

individuals with FH have up to a 20 times increased lifetime risk of early heart disease, yet 90 percent of people with FH are undiagnosed, according to the FH Foundation.

Children (even infants) can have high cholesterol

Many adults are regularly screened for high cholesterol, but it's not as common for children to be screened, although the American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that all children between the ages of 9 to 11 be screened for high cholesterol. These guidelines also recommend screening for FH as early as age 2 years if there is a family history of high cholesterol, early heart disease or known FH. Talk to your children's doctor about screening. FH is characterized by an LDL-C level of over 190

mg/dL in adults, or over 160 mg/dL in children. FH may also be confirmed with a genetic test, although this is not necessary for diagnosis.

You can maintain a healthy heart at any age

Being diagnosed with high cholesterol, heart disease or even FH is not a death sentence. Every person's health considerations are unique, but by working with your doctor, you can come up with a plan to help manage your health and maintain the strongest heart possible. This could include lifestyle changes and medications to manage the LDL cholesterol level in the blood. The key is to keep asking questions, learn about your specific health needs and stay dedicated to your heart health plan. February is American Heart Month

Living with osteoarthritis of the knee: Tips for managing function and leading an active life

(BPT) - Ken Meritt, 71, knew he had a serious problem with his right knee when the pain made it difficult for him to engage in even moderate activity. There was a constant, nagging ache when he walked, climbed stairs, got up from a sitting position or even rose from bed at night. A jogger, Meritt worried that he'd have to give that up, too.

After a visit to the doctor, he received the diagnosis: Osteoarthritis of the knee (OAK).

Osteoarthritis of the knee (OAK)

Approximately 21 million people in the U.S. are currently diagnosed with osteoarthritis of the knee, a progressive disease characterized by gradual degradation and loss of cartilage. While the exact cause of OAK is debatable, the impact is well known - pain and a loss of function. The prevalence of OAK has increased rapidly in recent years and is anticipated to continue growing due to factors that include age, obesity, genetics, injury and overuse of the knee in activities such as running, as Meritt found out.

Taking control

Getting a diagnosis like OAK can be debilitating. While you're exploring options to treat the physical part of the disease, don't forget the mental aspects as well. Stress can have an effect on OAK, so anything from yoga to meditation to spa days can help with that. Depression can also creep into your life on the back of an OAK diagnosis. Talk to your doctor honestly and learn all you can about your options.

Range of treatments

After consulting with his physician, Meritt learned that for patients with severe OAK, treatment options included a total knee replacement or opioids. Neither



Dr. David Bar-Or, M.D.

sounded like a good option to him.

Alan Stanley, 70, a retired deputy director of the Colorado Bureau of Investigation, knows all about knee replacement. He had one knee replaced because of bone-on-bone osteoarthritis, and was not looking forward to having the same procedure done on the other knee.

But he didn't have to endure another knee replacement, and Meritt is back to

jogging again. How? Both men were able to participate in a clinical trial for a low molecular-weight filtrate biologic of an FDA-approved human serum albumin (HSA) developed by Ampio Pharmaceuticals, Inc. (NYSE MKT: AMPE). The non-surgical treatment involves a single intra-articular injection, with a goal of reducing inflammation, relieving pain and improving function of the knee. For Meritt, the injection worked like a charm.

"Now I can walk, jog, climb stairs, get up from a chair and sleep without knee pain," Meritt said. "Ampion most certainly worked for my knee. It's pain free."

Stanley experienced similar results. Not only did the pain and disability associated with his OAK disappear after his injection some 18 months ago, but he didn't need that knee replacement after all. In fact, it feels better than the replaced knee,

he reported.

Background on HSA

What is this promising drug? Led by Dr. David Bar-Or, the treatment is based on a low molecular filtrate of commercial human serum albumin (HSA). Dr. Bar-Or now serves as Chief Scientific Officer and Director of Ampio Pharmaceuticals and the compound, named Ampion(TM), just reported results in a pivotal Phase 3 trial.

Maintaining an active lifestyle

Here are some tips for staying healthy, easing pain and getting the most out of life while dealing with OAK. (Hint: These tips make sense for people who don't have arthritis, too!)

1. Match activity to ability. Don't run harder than your knees can handle, and in general, make sure you are mindful of your abilities.
2. Optimize your exercise. Exercise might be the last thing you want to do when you're hurting, but it will improve the quality of your life. It can also strengthen the muscles that support and protect your knees.
3. It's OK to take a day off. Listen to your body. Rest and relaxation can be just what you need to feel pampered and recharged.
4. Diet matters! Foods rich in vitamin C, like fruits and vegetables, can help, along with omega-3 fatty acids like those found in fish oil. Focus on healthy eating, choosing low-fat dairy, whole grains, fish and lean meats.
5. Lose weight. Carrying extra weight around puts extra stress on your joints.
6. Keep up-to-date on medical initiatives. There is always something new on the medical landscape, so consult with your doctor for developments that may be important to you.



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Brewster-Pateros-Bridgeport Senior Center
S.A.I.L. Classes / Lunch Schedule

BREWSTER - The Brewster-Pateros-Bridgeport Senior Center. S.A.I.L. (Stay Active and Independent for Life) classes are every Tuesday and Thursday from 10-11 a.m. Please check with the Center to confirm this schedule.

The Center hosts Okanogan County Transportation and Nutrition (OCTN) meals Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. The suggested donation is \$4. For more information, 689-2815. They are located at 109 S. Bridge St.

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Boomers: 10 reasons to go nuts

(BPT) - For the roughly 75 million Americans who make up the baby boom generation, a healthy diet and lifestyle are the best weapons against age-related diseases.

“It’s vital at any age to adopt good habits to live a strong, fit and healthy life,” says Dr. Mike Roussell, a nationally recognized nutrition consultant and nutrition adviser to Men’s Health and Shape. “Fueling your life with tasty and nutrient-rich foods while making sure to be active every single day are essential components to keeping your body young and vibrant.”

Roussell’s recommendation? Nuts. In particular, pistachios. “Pistachios are a multitasking nut with fiber, healthy fats, and three specific types of antioxidants that may help fight the onset of age-related conditions that lead to poor health in these 10 ways.”

1. Heart health

Large population studies show that people who regularly eat nuts, such as pistachios, have a lower risk of dying from heart disease or suffering a heart attack. Pistachios provide 360-degree cardiovascular support in that they can promote improvements in cholesterol levels, blood pressure and blood vessel function.

2. Anti-inflammatory

Excessive inflammation

is one of the root causes of age-related conditions, such as arthritis. Pistachios contain a special form of vitamin E called gamma tocopherol, which has unique anti-inflammatory properties. Gamma tocopherol levels have also been shown to decrease as we age.

3. Weight loss

Being overweight can also contribute to a number of age-related illnesses. Studies show pistachios positively promote weight maintenance as the dietary fiber, fat and protein all work together to make us feel fuller and satiated longer, plus removing them from the shell slows down eating. Pistachios are also the lowest-fat nut.

4. Digestion

The fiber in pistachios also can help with digestion. Research shows that the fiber in pistachios works as a prebiotic and feeds the good bacteria in our digestive tract to improve the health of our digestive system. A single serving of pistachios contains as much as 3 grams of dietary fiber.

5. Blood glucose level

Developing adult onset diabetes, or Type 2 diabetes, is a common fear for boomers. The American Diabetes Association praises the health benefits of nuts, including pistachios, calling them a diabetes superfood because they improve how



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6. Skin health and appearance

UV light from the sun

promotes damage and accelerates the aging of our skin. Pistachios contain two carotenoid antioxidants that are concentrated in the skin and work to filter out and protect it against the damaging effects of UV light.

7. Eyesight

Pistachios contain lutein, a nutrient known to help improve eye health, especially in older individuals. Lutein has been shown to prevent and slow down macular de-

generation by providing more pigment for the eye, thereby reflecting more of the sun’s light, preventing damage to the retina.

8. Memory

Preliminary research shows that the fatty acids and antioxidants found in pistachios can help support brain health. The antioxidants in pistachios can help ward off excessive inflammation in the brain, a major cause of accelerated cognitive decline. Another study found that eating pistachios stimulated brain waves that aid the formation of ideas and memory processing.

9. Sleep

Nuts, including pistachios, are rich in minerals such as magnesium. One benefit of magnesium is that it may aid sleep because it assists in helping the muscles relax and quiet activity in the brain by working as an inhibitory neurotransmitter.

10. Energy

Pistachios have been shown to promote energy, which is why so many professional athletes consume them while training. More energy means we’ll commit to getting enough exercise.

But what is Dr. Mike’s main reason for having his clients eat pistachios? “They taste good. People are much more likely to stick to a healthy diet when the food is tasty and fun to eat.”

5 must-have home features for retirees

(BPT) - As we move through the different stages in our lives, our housing needs change too. The home you were excited to move into in your 30s might not be ideal for those now nearing retirement.

According to the Joint Center for Housing Stud-

ies of Harvard University, between 2015 and 2035, the number of people over the age of 75 living alone will nearly double from 6.9 million to 13.4 million. Being prepared for retirement and aging is important, so we’re going to take a closer look at the specific housing features

that would most benefit those who are looking to downsize or find that perfect home to “age in.”

1. Walk-in showers

Installing a walk-in bathtub or large shower is a good idea for ease and safety. Having extra room to move is not only aging-friendly, but a timeless trend that is easy to maintain. Clayton, one of America’s largest homebuilders, features optional walk-in showers with benches that are available in many of their homes. This is a feature that’s great at any age.

2. Wide doors and hallways

Spacious doors and wide hallways do the double duty of making your home look great while providing enough space to maneuver a wheelchair or walker through if needed.

3. Open floor plans

A home design trend that is perfect for any homeowner age is an open floor plan. But for boomers, an open



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As you grow older, you realize there is no one, perfect dream home. Rather, there are different dream homes for different stages of your life.

floor plan is more than just an aesthetic feature. Having wide spaces that allow you to move around is essential to maintaining your independence as you grow older. It also helps add more natural light and is ideal when gathering with family and friends.

4. Low maintenance

Fixing up an older home with good bones might look fun on TV, but it’s not something you will want to deal with in your retirement. Rather than trying to

troubleshoot problem after problem, look for a newly constructed home. Not only will you have fewer maintenance issues, but you can design a flexible floor plan that fits your lifestyle.

5. A customizable floor plan

The features listed so far are part of what is commonly known as age-in-place design. These home features work for people of all ages, but are designed so you can age into them. In addition, make sure the home you

purchase is single-story and fits the lifestyle you want for your future.

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Fight for your sight: 5 tips to fight Age-related Macular Degeneration

(BPT) The ability to see is one of our most precious gifts. Like most things in life, our vision may be impacted as we age. That's why it's important to learn about Age-related Macular Degeneration (AMD). Prevalent among older Americans, it affects one in five adults age 65 and older, and is the leading cause of blindness for this population. While there is no cure for this condition, there are steps that you can take to help reduce the risk of progression, including:

- 1) Schedule routine eye exams. As early stages of AMD may not present any symptoms, you may not think to consult your eye doctor. Keeping routine eye exams that include eye dilation may help to identify the condition early, as well as help maintain overall eye health.
- 2) Address symptoms immediately. See your eye care

professional right away if you experience sudden or gradual changes in vision quality. As AMD progresses, straight lines may appear distorted, central vision may look dark, blurry or white, or changes in color perception may become noticeable. If you have been diagnosed with AMD, you should also regularly check your eyes with an Amsler grid tool that helps track incremental vision changes.

3) Lead a healthy lifestyle. If you smoke, quit. Regular exercise can also help to maintain eye health and minimize the risk of progression. Other risk factors for AMD include obesity, high cholesterol and high blood pressure.

4) Eat right. A diet rich in green, leafy vegetables as well as healthy fatty acids may also help reduce the risk of progression. Foods that contain these nutrients include: spinach, kale, broccoli,



Age-related Macular Degeneration (AMD): Prevalent among older Americans, it affects one in five adults age 65 and older, and is the leading cause of blindness for this population.

cabbage, romaine and chard, and fatty fish such as salmon, sea bass, herring, whitefish,

mackerel, anchovies and sardines.

5) Consider supplements

recommended by the National Eye Institute. If you've been diagnosed with moder-

ate to advanced AMD, The National Eye Institute recommends taking a specific nutrient formula based on the AREDS 2 study, that may help reduce your risk of progression. Talk with your doctor to see if an AREDS 2 formula eye vitamin is right for you.

To raise awareness of this public health issue, Bausch + Lomb, in collaboration with Prevent Blindness, the nation's oldest volunteer eye health and safety organization dedicated to fighting blindness and saving sight, has launched the Why Eye Fight campaign.

To learn more about AMD, what steps you can take to help fight for your sight or to watch the patient stories or PSA, visit www.WhyEyeFight.com. You can also join the online conversation and share your story using #WhyEyeFight on Facebook and Twitter.

An underutilized retirement strategy

(BPT) Across the nation, thousands of seniors have used a Home Equity Conversion Mortgage (HECM), commonly called a reverse mortgage loan, as a savvy way to access the equity in their homes as part of their retirement strategy.

Those who are interested in a reverse mortgage loan should know that there are six main phases to the process: 1) educating and qualifying, 2) counseling and approving, 3) approval, 4) funding, 5) using and 6) settling.

1. Educating and qualifying

The HECM process begins by contacting an FHA-approved lender who will review the borrower's situation, educate them on the HECM program, and determine if they would likely qualify for a reverse mortgage loan.

"Once the lender has determined that the borrower is eligible, they work closely with them to shape the loan so it fits their needs," says Paul



Those who are interested in a reverse mortgage loan should know that there are six main phases to the process.

Fiore, Chief Sales Officer for American Advisors Group, the leading reverse mortgage lender in the nation. "At AAG, this is a highly personalized process designed to give the borrower the best outcome for their financial situation."

2. Counseling

Once qualified, borrowers are referred to reverse mort-

gage counseling, an important consumer safeguard mandated by the government. During counseling, a HUD-approved HECM counselor reviews the borrower's needs and circumstances. They consider how the funds might best be distributed, the financial and tax implications, and whether a HECM is right for them. If so, an application is submitted to the lender.

3. Approval

Next, the property will be appraised, and after that the approval process will begin. Before closing on the loan, borrowers will choose between several loan disbursement options, from taking it all out in a lump sum, receiving fixed monthly payments, opening a line of credit or any combination.

4. Funding

After the closing papers are signed, the homeowner has three business days to change their mind and cancel the loan (except if the loan is being used to purchase a new home). After the rescission period has passed, the funds are ready to be paid out through the payment option selected, subject to an initial disbursement limit that is determined by HUD.

5. Using your loan

The loan servicer will generally disburse funds via direct deposit or mail on the first

business day of the month, following the funding of the loan. The borrower can live in the home as long as they like without making monthly mortgage payments, as long as they continue to pay property taxes and insurance on the home, maintain it in good condition and comply with any other loan terms.

6. Settling your loan

If the last surviving borrower sells or transfers the property, passes away, or does not use the property as a principal residence for more than 12 months, the loan has reached a "maturity event," meaning that the loan comes due and no further funds can be disbursed. Borrowers also have the option of paying off their loan in full at any time

without penalty.

Following a maturity event, an appraisal will be ordered by the loan servicer to determine the property's current market value. The heirs can sell the property to repay the loan, or purchase the property for 95 percent of its appraised value. Since HECMs are non-recourse loans, the proceeds from the sale of the home are the only asset that can be taken to pay the loan's balance, even if the loan amount exceeds the value of the home.

A home equity conversion mortgage can be shaped to fit an individual's needs. With new consumer safeguards in place, many seniors are discovering that it is an important part of their retirement strategy.

5 house cleaning tips for allergy sufferers

(BPT) - Many people turn to nasal sprays and antihistamines to combat seasonal nasal allergies or hay fever, but keeping the home clean is just as important in the fight against allergies.

Keep the outdoors out

While it is hard to control exposure to pollen and other triggers when outside, those with allergies can avoid bringing pollen into the house with them. Keep shoes and jackets limited to the entryway or mudroom, and shower and wash hair before bedtime to stop the spread of pollen.

Vacuum often

One key to minimizing allergens at home is to vacuum at least twice per week. Start by using attachments to clean surfaces up high, work-

ing down to the floor. Make sure to vacuum curtains and upholstery as well as hard surfaces, and pay extra attention to entryways and areas around windows.

It's also important to select vacuum accessories that have been designed specifically to capture allergens. Arm & Hammer Premium Allergen vacuum bags are designed of synthetic material to capture even more allergens, dust and pet hair from the home's surfaces. In addition, the brand's HEPA filters trap particles 75 times smaller than a human hair, including 99.97 percent of dust mite debris, animal dander, molds and pollen. Replace bags every couple of months and filters at least every six months.

Wash bedding with hot water

Bedding also should be a focus when attempting to allergen-proof the home. Sheets, blankets and comforters attract dust mites in even the cleanest environments. Wash bedding once a week in hot water to keep allergens at bay. It's also smart to consider protective covers for mattresses and pillows to stop dust mites from getting in too deep.

Keep air dry

Too much moisture in the air can help dust mites thrive, and may also lead to mold. Using a dehumidifier, especially in humid climates or summer months, can help control the spread of mold and dust mites.

While plants can build ambiance in the home, some indoor plants can amplify allergy symptoms by releasing

spores and other allergens into the air. For those with a green thumb who can't live without plants at home, make sure to research the plants that are least likely to increase pollen or mold exposure indoors.



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A type of fish oil, cod liver oil is a good source of the fat-soluble vitamins A and D

My neighbor swears by cod liver oil and says I should try it. Could it improve my health?

Drinking cod liver oil may help you if you happen to be deficient in either vitamin A or vitamin D. A type of fish oil, cod liver oil is a good source of the fat-soluble vitamins A and D. It also may contain Omega-3 essential fatty acids like other types of fish oil, helping ease stiff joints and minor muscle aches.

Cod liver oil didn't start out as a medicine. A byproduct of the Norwegian fishing industry, cod liver oil was originally used to soften leather and as a hoof dressing for horses. In the 1800s, German physicians found that when taken internally, cod liver oil could cure children of rickets, a common disease back then that caused serious bone deformities. Swallowing cod liver oil also helped relieve joint aches, gout and "obstinate constipation".

ASK
DR. LOUISE



Dr. Louise Achey

According to the United States Pharmacopeia (USP), Cod Liver Oil, USP is "a thin, oily liquid with a characteristic, slightly fishy odor and a definitely fishy taste" made by "steaming the livers of the Atlantic cod, then straining the oil that rises to the top of the vat or kettle". Cod Liver Oil, USP lists 3 main ingredients: vitamin A, vitamin D and Omega-3 essential fatty acids.

By 1851, cod liver oil was declared "one of the most esteemed remedies currently available". Doctors strongly recommended it but children hated taking it, and suggestions on how to improve the "fishy"

taste of cod liver oil began to show up in medical and pharmacy references of that period. For example, the 19th edition of The United States Dispensary published in 1907 contains this advice about Cod Liver Oil, USP: "It may be taken alone or mixed with some vehicle calculated to conceal its taste and obviate nausea. Peppermint oil has been found to be helpful." Another suggestion from the same source, is to "chew a small piece of orange peel before and after taking the medicine." That should be pretty effective in masking the taste of fish oil, or just about anything else!

Cod liver oil may improve

your health if your diet is low in either vitamin D or vitamin A. Vitamin D is essential to incorporate minerals such as calcium into new bone tissue. A nutritional deficiency of vitamin D causes rickets in children and osteomalacia in adults. Without enough vitamin D, new bone formed by a growing child is not rigid enough to support their body weight, creating crooked bones and skeletal deformities, while in adults, vitamin D deficiency causes weak bones or osteomalacia. Vitamin A deficiency can cause growth retardation, night blindness and an increased susceptibility to infections.

The official recipe of cod liver oil listed in the United States Pharmacopia (USP) is Cod Liver Oil, USP. It contains 850 USP units of Vitamin A, 85 USP units of Vitamin D, and approximately 1 gram of Omega-3 essential fatty acids in each tasty teaspoonful, a concentration similar to that found in

salmon oil.

The dose of cod liver oil recommended in the USP is one teaspoonful 3-4 times daily for children and one tablespoonful (3 teaspoonfuls, or 15ml) 3-4 times a day for adults. Other formulations of cod liver oil besides the standard version contain extra vitamin A or D that's been added by the manufacturer. The amount of Omega-3 fatty acids in cod liver oil varies, with formulas using Atlantic cod having the most and those from Pacific cod having little to none. It's interesting that cod liver oil was considered helpful in chronic rheumatism (joint or muscle aches) because at least one product contained nearly the same concentration of Omega-3 fatty acids as today's salmon oil supplements.

To reduce the prevalence of rickets in its children the United States began fortifying milk in the 1930's with added vitamin A and D. Every 8 ounce serving of cow's milk has 100 international

units of Vitamin D which is 25% of its recommended daily intake and 150 units of vitamin A, which is 10% of its recommended daily intake. Today's ready to eat cereals are also fortified with 10% of the recommended daily intake of both vitamins A and D. Rickets is now very rare in the United States.

Cod liver oil was one of the first effective vitamin supplements available, but thankfully there are more palatable options today to prevent vitamin A and D deficiency. One tablet of either Centrum Silver® or Flintstones® chewable is today's modern, and much tastier equivalent.

Dr. Louise Achey, Doctor of Pharmacy is a 39-year veteran of pharmacology and author of Why Dogs Can't Eat Chocolate: How Medicines Work and How YOU Can Take Them Safely. Your questions and comments are always welcome at www.AskDrLouise.com 2018 Louise Achey

Brain drained? These habits can help maintain a healthy brain

(BPT) Everyone has those days. You're operating in a fog, or perhaps you spaced out on a family member's name in the middle of dinner, or maybe you just find it hard to concentrate on work or hobbies. When these unwanted situations begin to come up more often, you may start to worry. Aging has long been associated with a slow mental decline.

The good news is there are simple things you can do to clear the cobwebs and regain your focus. Dr. Mike Dow, a psychotherapist and best-selling author, says we often don't realize the brain is just like the heart, our muscles, our lungs and bones - it needs maintenance, and healthy habits to help keep it working at its very best.

"People understand pretty well that if they eat healthy, quit smoking and start exercising, they can improve their cardiovascular health," Dow says. "But they don't always connect the dots of living a healthy lifestyle to improving cognitive health." To help you reach your optimal brain health, Dow offers these everyday tips.

Give yourself a daily challenge

If you catch yourself in a rut or locked in your routine, it may be time to find ways to stretch your mind muscles with a new and challenging activity. Researchers have discovered that healthy brains need certain levels of reserves, and challenging them is one way to build those reserves.

"Think of your brain like a bank account," Dow says. "Every time you learn something new, or play a challenging game or read a book, it's like depositing a dollar into that account. The more cash deposits you make, the more you have to spare."

Feed your brain

Like other parts of the body, the brain needs food and nutrients, and the right food can go a long way to support brain health. An antioxidant-rich diet including things like unsweetened tea, berries and turmeric can protect the brain from damage that comes from aging and oxidative stress.

Dow also recommends taking a supplement like Natrol Cognium. It contains a unique silk protein that's been shown in human clinical studies to protect the brain from oxidative stress. The studies also show that it improves memory and



BPT

There are simple things you can do to clear the cobwebs and regain your focus.

concentration by increasing blood flow and nutrition to the brain. If you're interested in learning more about the benefits of Natrol Cognium, visit natrol.com/benefits/brain-health/.

Tend to your relationships

As life and circumstances bring inevitable changes, the number of people we count

as friends and loved ones can change over the years. It takes effort, but Dow says it's important to try to maintain our relationships and be open to creating new ones, because they can have a profound effect on brain health.

"Relationships tend to buffer us from the stress of daily life, which is good because over time, excess stress can

cause inflammation," Dow says. "At the same time, good, healthy relationships give our lives meaning." To meet new people, try simple things like inviting a neighbor over for dessert, joining a book club or volunteering for a nonprofit or cause that's important to you.

Get enough sleep

We often short ourselves on sleep when life gets busy, but it's important to make it a priority, Dow says.

"Think of nighttime sleep as a wash-and-rinse cycle that clears away the 'bad stuff' that builds up during

the day," Dow says. "Brain fog and dementia-causing plaques are washed away by cerebrospinal fluid, and this process is more effective when you're sleeping."

Dow recommends practicing

healthy sleep habits, such as striving for eight hours each night, being consistent with your bedtime routine and using melatonin instead of prescription and over-the-counter sleep aids to help you drift off.



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