

# WELLNESS review

## Brain Health

### *Building a better brain.*

Would you like to optimise your memory and cognitive function? Would you like to support your brain function? Maintaining a healthy mind and active brain throughout our entire life is something we all want. Fortunately, it is something that we can all achieve.

### *Many people's greatest fear is not death, but losing their mind.*

Many of us fear losing our memory and our mental function. Tragically, a large number of us will experience this personally or through a close relative or partner. The incidence of dementia in the elderly is increasing rapidly due to a combination of increased stress, increased oxidative exposure and nutrient insufficiencies.

### *Brain health throughout life.*

The health of the brain determines much of our experience of life, influencing our moods, our intelligence and our overall quality of life. Maintaining brain health throughout life should therefore be a top priority for all of us. You need to consider the constant changing requirements of your brain in order to achieve a life time of healthy mental function. In order to address all the challenges and changes your brain experiences throughout life, it is important to incorporate good dietary choices, key natural medicines and both physical and mental exercise. This will help to promote a healthy brain and mind.

### *Six keys to a healthy brain:*

1. Exercise and challenge your brain.
2. Nourish your brain through good nutrition.
3. Enjoy physical activity.
4. Stress management.
5. Sleep well.
6. Take natural supplements.

### *1. Strain the brain to train the brain.*

The more you think, the smarter you become. Your brain is just like your body, the more you exercise it the more powerful it becomes. You can train your brain by choosing appealing and challenging leisure activities (e.g. crosswords, puzzles, learning a new language, etc) and by challenging yourself at work.

### *2. Eat your way to a better brain.*

Take a healthy approach to your diet and lifestyle by eating the following each day:

- Protein rich foods.
- A minimum of 3 cups of fresh vegetables.
- Two pieces of fresh fruit.
- A handful of nuts and seeds.
- Two tablespoons of good oils.
- Drinking at least 8 glasses of water.
- Enjoy regular exercise and fun.

By following a healthy diet and lifestyle program you can provide key nutrients for healthy brain function.

### *3. Exercise builds better brain health.*

Sustained participation in physical exercise well into old age has been shown to:

- Enhance learning and memory.
- Reduce age and disease related mental decline.
- Protect against age-related degeneration of crucial areas of the brain associated with higher cognitive function.

Not only does exercise help to reduce the risk factors for cognitive decline, such as cardiovascular risk, inflammation and energy metabolism, it also helps to enhance learning and memory.

### *4. When life becomes stressful, what do you do?*

Do you relax, meditate and strive towards a healthy balance between work and leisure? Or do you keep pushing yourself and not give your body and brain a break? Many people put work and stress before their own health and wellbeing. Ensuring that you take time out to relax is extremely important for brain health, because excessive stress can impair memory and brain function.

### *5. Are you counting sheep in order to sleep?*

The most common reason people have difficulty getting to sleep is that they are unable to shut off the anxieties and worries of the day and are preparing for tomorrow's problems. Sleep is important for repair of both body and mind. If you are having trouble sleeping, talk to us today about what natural options we can offer you for better sleep.

### *6. Nutrients to nourish the brain.*

A multivitamin and mineral supplement is the best way to provide vital nutrients for brain function. Vitamins and minerals improve energy, support metabolism and nervous system function and promote better brain function.

Omega 3 essential fatty acids from fish oil are also extremely important for your brain. Studies have shown that DHA, one of the major components of fish oil, improves cognitive function. This component has also been shown to be very effective for protection against age-related mental decline.

Finally, brain tissue is extremely vulnerable to damage by free radicals. Replenishing the brain with antioxidants is therefore a great idea to help reduce the damaging effects of oxidative stress and aid in the prevention of age-associated memory impairment. Great antioxidants to help support healthy brain function include resveratrol, vitamin C and vitamin E.

**The health of our brain is so important for quality of life, therefore, keeping our brains healthy is something we should all be focused on. With the six simple steps outlined here, you too can have optimal brain health for life! Come in today and let us help you to support your brain health so that you can maintain positive moods, healthy cognition and quality of life well into old age.**

