

Brain Health Across the lifespan:
From Research to Practice and Policy

By

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Brain Health in the United States

1. *Establish a national priority for brain health across the lifespan.* Similar to heart disease, we are losing many of our loved ones to diseases of the brain. This can be appreciated simply by adding the numbers of persons suffering Alzheimer's disease, stroke, Parkinson's disease, Multiple Sclerosis and others.
2. *Educate all on the basics of brain structure and function.* Such education should occur in every grade school and in every setting with new parents. We will never care for our brains if we do not know our brains.
3. *Establish the American Brain Association (ABA).* We need to establish the parallel association for the brain as exists for the heart. Once established, stroke can finally be placed in its proper home.
4. *Identify specific behaviors and settings that promote brain health.* Part of the education process on brain health promotion will be to identify those behaviors and settings/environments that foster brain health at different parts of the lifespan.
5. *Reconceptualize the school system as a center for brain health.* Schools represent one of the primary existing centers for brain health. Curriculum might be developed to grow specific areas of the brain and be created by a team of neuroscientists, speech and language experts and teachers. We might also consider having our most sophisticated neuroimaging technology (magnetic resonance imaging and functional neuroimaging) placed in schools. It is an embarrassment that we place such sophisticated windows into our brain structure

and function only in medical centers where they are used only to detect pathology.

These machines can also detect growth and development from a health perspective.

6. *Become proactive and less medical with our health.* Our nation has adopted the idea and practice of being reactive with regard to our health. We do not act until we develop an illness. Mental status examinations should be done annually beginning around age 20 and brain imaging every 10 years. Our health system is really a disease system and we overestimate the value of things that are medical, invasive, and expensive. This Guide to brain health is built on lifestyle (see www.paulnusbaum.com for Dr. Nussbaum's Brain Health Lifestyle) and the United States can benefit much from increasing a focus on non-medical approaches to health.
7. *Develop payer systems for Proactive health.* Health care providers will not change their training and practice of medicine until the payment system is changed. Our nation can benefit from a system that financially rewards both medical and non-medical health promotion/education.
8. *Develop, educate, and apply the brain health diet.* We are getting close to understanding which foods help to boost the function of our brain. Once developed, the brain health diet can be applied to restaurant menus, grocery stores, and be designated by a specific icon that consumers can recognize.
9. *Incorporate lifelong learning into our health and health system.* Lifelong learning programs are brain health promoting and can be part of any progressive health insurance plan. Our nation should invest in education and lifelong learning as a

health issue and thereby save money as dementia is reduced or delayed in later life.

10. *Reconsider Retirement.* Retirement as it is currently positioned in our nation promotes passivity, something that promotes the risk of brain disease. A nation interested in brain health reinforces everyone to stay involved and to contribute in meaningful ways across the lifespan. This means incorporating sane policy that realizes age 65 has no validity as a magical threshold for anything!
11. *Invest heavily in Neural Energies, the future for unleashing the power of the human brain and for improving forever the human race.*

The Enriched Environment and Neurogenesis: Research to Practice

Dr. Nussbaum's Brain Health Lifestyle

Five Major Factors set Within the Novel and Complex

Socialization

Physical Activity

Mental Stimulation

Nutrition

Spirituality

Socialization

Remain integrated in the community
www.mywayvillage.com
Travel
Contribute in meaningful and productive ways
Maintain a network of friends

Avoid passivity and passive pursuits
Consider groups, clubs, and social forums
Work, hobbies, and volunteer pursuits
Recreate with others
Cook and consume brain-healthy foods with others
Monitor your loneliness

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Physical Activity

Walk on a daily basis (one mile a day)
Physical exercise several times a week
Aerobic exercise
Maintain physical activity
Running is good
Swimming and other aerobic exercises
Knitting
Gardening
Dance
Use the non-dominant hand and leg more

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Mental Stimulation

Board game playing
Crossword puzzles and computer based cognitive training
Sign language
Learn a second language
Develop new talents (novel and complex) and limit the rote and passive
Pray and meditate daily
Reduce television and video games
Read, write, and speak daily
Create
Enroll in lifelong learning
Consider more exposure to classic music
Think and problem solve
Increase occupation-related skills
www.fitbrains.com

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Nutrition

Increase omega-3 fatty acids and achieve 1-4 (omega 3 to Omega 6 blance)

www.mymoxor.com/dr paul

Increase antioxidants

Reduce and avoid trans fatty acids and fried foods

Reduce processed foods

Consume fewer calories daily

Eat with utensils

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Spirituality

Slow down

Learn relaxation procedures

Learn to Meditate

Pray daily

Attend a formalized place of worship on a regular basis

Give yourself 30 minutes a day

Say no to being overly committed

Enjoy the moment

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