

Memory Tips You Can Use Today

Contributed by Steve Gillman
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The following memory tips are for all ages. Although memory loss often comes with old age, that does not mean it is a necessary result of aging. In fact, there are often specific causes, and a declining ability to remember things can be reversed in many cases. Here are some quick tips to get you started.

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1. Avoid cigarettes. Smoking is linked to chronic obstructive pulmonary disease. Even before there is a diagnosis, there may be reduced blood flow, and therefore reduced oxygen to the brain. That decreases brain function in general, and memory in particular.

{bot_wrgoogle}2. Avoid toxic drugs. This includes most illegal drugs, but also many prescription drugs. The following have been associated with memory loss after prolonged use: Lithium, digitalis, reserpine, Inderal (propranolol), Aldomet (methyldopa), and Tagamet (cimetidine). Some high blood pressure medications have been linked to memory loss as well.

3. Relax. Chronic stress releases cortisol, which at high levels interferes with the part of the brain that handles recent memories. This part of the brain has even been shown to shrink after long periods of stress. Take several deep breaths through your nose several times daily, while letting the tension drain from your body, or practice regular meditation.

4. Get proper nutrition. There are probably many nutritional factors that affect memory. It is known that brain function can be negatively impacted by a deficiency in vitamin B-12, folate and niacin. If you suspect that memory lapses might be due to deficiencies, you can have a blood test to check the levels of these vitamins in your system. Or you could try taking some good supplements to see if that helps.

5. Treat your head well. It is well known that severe head trauma can cause loss of brain function, but the evidence is growing that the cumulative effect of repeated minor injuries can do the same. Wear a helmet when bicycling or in any situation where you might hit your head on something.

6. Keep exercising that memory. This may be the easiest of these memory tips to put into practice. Just start learning something new, or start an intellectually challenging hobby. Even doing crossword puzzles regularly has been shown to slow the decline of age-related memory loss.

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