

Your
Health



Sharpen Short-Term Memory

Are you feeling a little foggy lately? Does your list of things to do seem a bit fuzzy? You might be dealing with some form of short-term memory loss.

While these may not be signs of serious health issues, they can be indicators that you should discuss the matter with your physician.

One in eight Americans over the age of 60 reports worsening memory loss, according to a study by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

There are many ways to improve your short-term memory, including regular mental exercises, the proper amount of sleep and even a healthier diet. Always be sure to check with your medical team before making major changes to your regular routine.

KEEP YOUR MIND BUSY

Many people understand the importance of physical activity when it comes to living longer, healthier lives. What you may not realize is that mental exercise can be just as important.

Do you take time out of your day to keep your mind in shape? If not, it might be time to start incorporating activities such as crossword puzzles



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or volunteering into your weekly schedule.

These types of activities can keep your mind sharp, especially if you're suffering from short-term memory loss.

SPEND TIME WITH FRIENDS

Consistent social interaction helps reduce occurrences of depression and stress —

both of which have been linked to memory loss.

Spending more time with friends and loved ones is easy. You just have to make time for this social aspect of your life. Look for ways to interact with more people around you. Share in their stories and be open with your own life.

This type of interaction will help you connect on a person-

al level while strengthening your cognitive functioning.

GET MORE SLEEP

As more research shines a light on the importance of sleep, Americans are starting to realize the damaging effects of skipping out on their Zs.

Many recent studies, including from Northwestern University and the National

Institutes of Health, have provided us with a deeper understanding of how sleep functions in the brain to support learning and memory.

Adequate sleep — at least seven hours per night for most adults — plays a critical role in your overall health and productivity. Get yourself on a consistent schedule. Your memory will thank you.

Sticking with a PT Plan

Going through a comprehensive rehabilitation process can be both physically and mentally draining.

Not only are you dealing with pain and suffering but also the long road ahead to a successful recovery, depending on the severity of the injury.

Fortunately, there are many outstanding physical therapy professionals in your area who can help you through this journey. Find an accredited therapist who has experience with your specific type of injury.

With a little research and a positive attitude, you can find the right fit for you when it comes to getting back to normal physical activity.

SET REASONABLE GOALS

Your physical therapist will be instrumental in setting realistic goals that push you to succeed while also keeping you on track.

Work closely with your local professional to determine a starting point and move forward with clear, defined objectives. Maintain a journal as you progress to keep track of the steps you have taken. Write matters related to the actual process and the physical feelings associated with each milestone.

You also can share these notes with your physical therapist and your physician to make sure everyone is on the



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same page.

STAY FOCUSED

Physical rehab is tough. It's important to choose an environment that offers you some sort of relaxation and comfort. Depending on your injury, you could be facing a long road ahead.

Be sure to check into a couple of different rehab facilities as you research your options. Ask the following questions of your potential providers:

- What types of certifications do your physical therapists hold?
- How will you tailor the rehab program to my specific

needs?

- What type of timeline is expected for my recovery?

THE BENEFITS OF REHAB

According to the American Physical Therapy Association (APTA), the primary benefits of a quality physical rehab program include:

- Pain relief;
- Strength and endurance;
- Motion and mobility improvement;
- Shortened recovery time;
- Improvement with flexibility, movement and balance;
- and
- Education pertaining to your mobility goals.



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Eat a Healthier Breakfast

For busy professionals and parents with school-aged children, breakfast can be the most chaotic time of the day. Trying to make it to work or school on time can mean half-hearted efforts in the kitchen that fail to set you up for a productive, healthy day.

No matter your schedule, it's important to spend some time planning healthy breakfasts for you and your

family. A good breakfast has been proven to improve brain function and concentration while also reducing irritability and tiredness. So, get out your spoon and dig in. Your day awaits.

According to a recent study, people who skip breakfast might be putting their heart health at risk.

A HEALTHIER HEART

New research from the Cleveland Clinic discovered a link between unhealthy lifestyle habits and skipping breakfast.

They found that “breakfast-skippers” were eating more throughout the day, drinking more alcohol and were more likely to smoke. They also had more heart disease risk factors, such as more

weight, higher triglycerides, higher blood pressure and higher LDL or “bad” cholesterol, according to the research.

WORK WITH A DIETITIAN

Overwhelmed by the research on what constitutes a healthy breakfast? Not sure where you'll find the time to plan meals?

Work with a local dietitian to build a custom breakfast plan for you and your family. These professionals can assess your health and offer tailored recommendations to fit your needs and schedule.

The best thing about working with a local dietitian is they are oftentimes plugged into local food providers and will stress the importance of eating

locally sourced ingredients. This approach can improve your overall diet, especially if you opt for organic options.

VARY YOUR MENU

The healthiest breakfasts feature a variety of items. If you're an egg person, go with scrambled eggs with turkey bacon, fruit and whole-grain toast.

Whole-grain waffles go great with fresh fruit and organic syrup. If you prefer a more substantial start to your day, toast a bagel and add fresh ham, cheese and vegetables.

In a rush? Go for some fresh fruit that is easy to take on the go, including bananas, apples or a container of mixed berries.

Lose Weight the Natural Way

If you've researched losing weight, then you've found lots of varying opinions on the best ways to achieve your goals.

Many companies offer "shortcut" solutions that include special shakes or supplements that are unproven on the marketplace and untested by the Food and Drug Administration.

Depending on the level of your obesity, your physician might recommend losing weight the old-fashioned way: diet and exercise.

CUT BACK ON SUGARS

Cutting sugars from your diet is the first and most important step to losing excess weight.

Think of how many soft drinks or sugary candies you consume on a weekly basis. Now multiply that by 52 for a snapshot of your yearly sugar intake.

Sugary foods and drinks stimulate secretion of insulin — the main fat storage hormone in your body. When you drop your insulin, the body can break down fat quicker and help you lose weight.

According to the Mayo Clinic, lowering insulin helps your kidneys shed excess sodium and water out of your body. This reduces bloat and water weight.

MIX IN MORE PROTEIN

As you begin your weight-loss mission, each of your meals should include a protein source, a fat source and low-carb vegetables.

Here are some healthy protein sources to mix into your diet:

Meat: Beef, chicken, pork, lamb, turkey, bacon

Fish and seafood: Salmon, trout, shrimp, lobsters, tilapia

Eggs: Omega-3 enriched is best

Low-carb vegetable options include broccoli, kale, Brussels sprouts, cabbage,

cauliflower, spinach, lettuce, cucumber and celery.

EXERCISE

Physical fitness instructors recommend going to the gym three to four times a week. A good mix of cardiovascular activity, such as i.e., running,

jumping or swimming, and weightlifting is ideal for shedding excess weight.

Consult with a local personal trainer for advice if you're unsure of how to get started. Most have flexible plans and solutions to fit people of all sizes and fitness levels.



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A Healthy Workspace

The majority of Americans are stressed at work, and that stress can have a significant impact on their overall health.

If you find yourself overwhelmed at work, there might be some things you can change to help get out of this funk. After all, you spend a large chunk of your day doing your job. It's important to make sure it offers a positive environment.

CLEAN UP

Clutter on your desk can distract you from focusing at work and doing your job well. Be sure to spend some time each day organizing paperwork and cleaning up any small messes.

The same can be said about your work computer. If you find yourself working from dozens of open internet browsers and documents, you might find it hard to focus on one particular task.

Keep things streamlined and organized for an optimal work experience.

USE MUSIC FOR RELAXATION

If you are permitted to use headphones during the day, do so. Music has been shown to reduce stress and impact mental health in a positive way.

A study out of McGill



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University in Montreal found that music improves the body's immune system function and reduces stress. Listening to music also was found to be more effective than prescription drugs in reducing anxiety in healthcare patients before surgery, according to the report published in Trends in Cognitive Sciences.

These findings underscore

the impact music can have in stressful environments. Build a playlist and let music be your guide to a happier — and healthier — career.

DRINK WATER

We all know the benefits of drinking enough water. From the time we are children, we are educated on the benefits of H₂O and its effects on our

well-being.

But many adults opt for sugary drinks, coffees or teas as ways of keeping themselves hydrated throughout a busy work day. Big mistake, according to a study in the Journal of Human Nutrition and Dietetics.

Researchers from the University of Illinois found that participants who drank

the most plain water in their daily diet consumed fewer total calories, drank fewer sweetened beverages and took in less total fat, saturated fat, sugar, salt and cholesterol.

If you're in an office environment all day surrounded by vending machines and unhealthy snacks, water might be your new best friend.

Choosing a Smartwatch

Allowing convenient access to music, incoming calls, texts, payment methods and exercise tracking, the smartwatch has revolutionized the workout.

These little wrist-worn mini-computers can range from about \$100 to several hundred dollars, depending on the level of tracking and extra perks you need to get your heart pumping at the gym.

Be sure to shop around at your local electronics store for sales or preferred pricing for business accounts.

A GO-TO TOOL

Relatively new to the workout world, smartphones have evolved quickly. Many smartphone models come with their own network connections and do not need to be paired with a nearby phone or WiFi network.

They track your workouts through a series of built-in sensors, including accelerometers, barometers and heart-rate monitors. Many of them are built with fashion in mind and have transformed from clunky to sleek over the past few years.

WHAT TO CONSIDER

Test them out: Many cell



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phone providers have smartwatches on display, giving you the opportunity to test out their applications and overall functionality. Be sure to try out the interface before committing to buy. Many brands now offer smartwatches, so shopping around is key.

Price: Set your budget and

stick to it. Remember that many wireless providers charge a monthly fee to add a smartphone to your plan. There also will be add-on costs for buying apps as you go. Consider these potential costs when settling on the model for you.

Comfort: The smartwatch

you choose should be comfortable to wear. Some are quite large, so take this into consideration as you shop around. If you're looking for an option that is smaller and more discreet, there are plenty of models on the market for you.

Charging and battery life: Battery life can range widely

depending on the model and how much you use it for communications and social media. Most smartwatches can last between a couple of days and a week without charging. Check into the watch's specifications for more information on potential battery life and charging requirements.

Preventing Prediabetes

According to the American Diabetes Association, more than 29 million Americans have diabetes and it's the seventh leading cause of death. While that statistic is widely known, prediabetes is a serious health condition that doesn't get as much attention.

Prediabetes occurs when blood sugar levels are higher than normal but not high enough yet to be diagnosed as type 2 diabetes. Approximately 84 million American adults — more than one out of three — have the condition, according to the National Diabetes Prevention Program.

WHAT CAUSES PREDIABETES?

People may suffer from prediabetes for years without any clear symptoms. This makes it tough for physicians to detect the issue in otherwise healthy people.

Patients are their own best advocates when it comes to identifying risk factors for prediabetes. Here are some warning signs, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:

- Being overweight;
- Being 45 years or older;
- Having a parent, brother, or sister with type 2 diabetes;
- Being physically active less than three times a week;
- Ever having gestational diabetes (diabetes during pregnancy) or giving birth to a baby who weighed more than 9 pounds; and
- Having polycystic ovary syndrome.

Race and ethnicity also are factors: African Americans, Hispanic Americans, American Indians, Pacific Islanders and some Asian Americans are at higher risk

STEPS TO TAKE

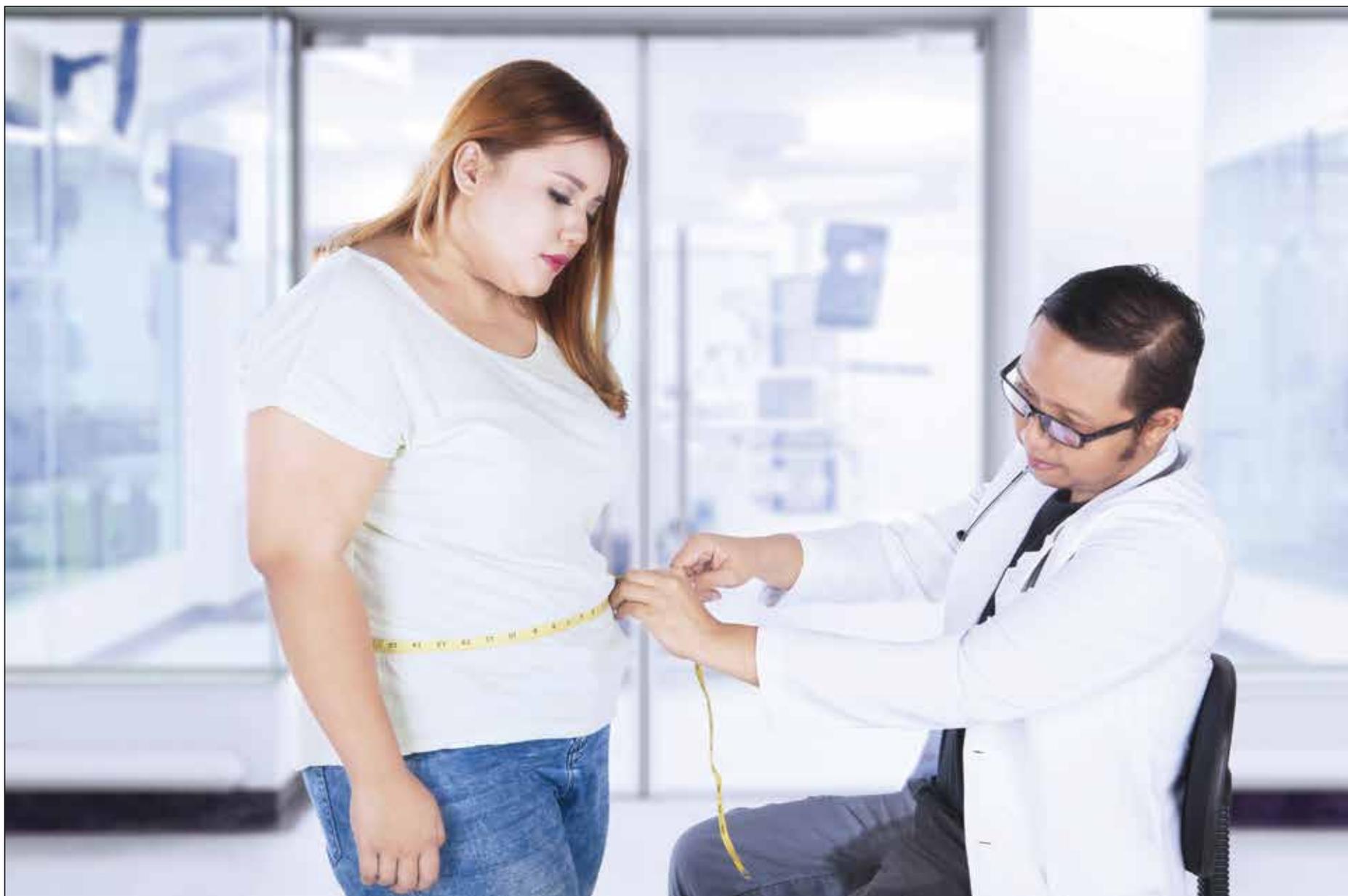
Fortunately, the process of getting tested for prediabetes is a simple one. You can undergo a blood sugar test to find out if you have the condition.

If your test comes back positive, your physician will likely recommend losing some weight. Research shows that dropping a small amount of weight and getting regular physical activity can lower your risk for developing type 2 diabetes.

What is a small amount of weight? The CDC defines this as 5 percent of your body weight — just 10 to 14 pounds

for a 200-pound person. Regular physical activity means getting at least 150 minutes a week of brisk walking or a similar activity.

Ask your physician or nurse if there is a CDC-recognized National Diabetes Prevention Program offered in your community. Getting hooked into a quality program can make a difference in preventing type 2 diabetes.



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