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How Can I Keep My Memory Sharp as I Age?

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How many of us have had the occasional “senior moment,” where you walk into a room and forget why you went there in the first place or you completely miss an appointment because it just slipped your mind? Those are very common examples of memory lapses that can occur at any age.

Surprisingly, aging alone is actually not a cause of cognitive decline. Significant memory loss is mainly due to brain injuries, neurological illness and natural disorders – not old age.

Here at *Landis at Home*, we want to offer some tips on memory support *now*, no matter your age.

Best Ways to Keep Your Mind Active:

Exercise

As you know, the mind and body are interconnected. It is important to stay active with regular exercise for memory care and brain health. Exercise is not only smart for your heart, but it also can help ward off anxiety and depression, as well as many other brain benefits. Exercise increases blood flow to the brain, which can help protect existing brain cells, as well as promote new brain cell growth. Think of exercising as providing more fuel for your brain to operate.

Keep Learning

You heard it from your teachers in grade school and it still rings true today: Read a book! Not only does reading teach you new things, but it also helps to build new connections in your brain to support strong memories. Pursuing new hobbies and learning new skills keeps you mentally active and can help improve your memory.

Healthy Habits

Getting a good night's sleep, maintaining good posture and healthy eating are all beneficial to brain health and longevity. Proper amounts of sleep are vitally important to memory health. Upright posture improves circulation and blood flow to your brain. Diets rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, legumes, fish and healthy fats, such as olive oil, are known to be "brain foods." A healthy diet can improve the health of your brain, which can translate into better mental function and memory care.

Keep Your Brain Active

Simple tasks, such as painting, drawing, doodling, listening to music, writing and solving puzzles challenge your brain in great ways. Think of the arts as excellent workouts for your brain that increase mental capacity. By keeping your mind active with such mental exercises, you are activating processes that stimulate communication among your brain cells.

Organize Your Brain

To help "organize" your brain and maximize your memory, utilize calendars, lists, address books and other organizational tools for the mundane everyday thoughts that pass through your brain each day.

Repetition

Just like when you made flash cards in high school to study for a big test, repetition is important when it comes to memorizing information. Be sure to properly space out the repetition to ensure the information is stored in your brain. For instance, if you just met someone and want to remember his/her name, use their name several times while speaking to the person. "Spaced rehearsal" comes

in handy when you are learning new information that you want to store in your brain. It is important to repeat the information in your head, spaced out over time, rather than just repeatedly in the short term.

What Memory Support Services Can Help My Loved One with Significant Memory Loss?

Perhaps your moments of forgetfulness are more than just “senior moments.” Maybe you or a loved one have significant memory loss and have been diagnosed with Alzheimer’s Disease or dementia. If this describes you or a family member, or you are a caregiver, here are a few memory support services throughout the Lancaster region that can help you and your family:

Landis at Home

Taking care of a loved one with memory loss can be very stressful at times. *Landis at Home* can help you as a caregiver. If you or your loved one is in need of assistance or just in need of a much-deserved break, call *Landis at Home* at 717-509-5800. *Landis at Home* provides home care services, as well as a variety of support and services, through our thoughtful and loving caregivers who have specialized dementia-care training.

You can also learn more about Landis At Home’s services on their website.

Landis Adult Day Services

Also located on *Landis Homes* campus are two types of adult day services, referred to as Eden West and Eden East. Eden West is an adult day service designed for adults who are unable to safely stay at their home alone during the day and would benefit from social interaction. This community helps to build friendships and enriches daytime hours for adults with meaningful activities and healthy meals. Eden East is an adult day service geared towards adults with memory loss. Meaningful group and individual activities, as well as structured schedules and limits on the amount of environmental stimulation, help people with memory loss.

Please read more about Landis Adult Day Services on their website.

Memory Loss Support Group

Landis Homes, located in Lititz, hosts a Memory Loss Support Group on the last Tuesday of each month, January through November. This support group is organized to offer support and information to caregivers. It is co-sponsored with the Alzheimer’s Association Greater Pennsylvania Chapter. Please consider joining this free group that is open to the public. For more information, contact *Landis Homes* at 717-581-3939.

Landis Homes’ website offers an informative brochure that you can download on their [website](#).

Memory Support

Caring for someone with dementia in your home is unique and requires an individualized approach. *Landis at Home*, located in Lititz, has trained caregivers that can provide assistance with personal care, provide companionship and socialization, and provide a much-needed break from caregiving. Memory loss or dementia can be mentally and physically exhausting to even the most committed caregiver.

Learn more about memory support services at Landis at Home's website.

Memory Café

Memory Cafes are a nationwide outreach to help bring people suffering from dementia and their caregivers together to have a sense of community. Currently, there are Memory Cafes located in New Holland and Lititz. These local groups, hosted by national organizations, meet one or two times a month in community churches. The goal of Memory Cafes are to provide an informal social opportunity to bring those with memory loss out into their community with their caregivers in a safe and caring environment.

Landis at Home, a Pennsylvania licensed home care agency, provides reliable, cost-effective home care services to adults who live on the campus of Landis Homes, or who live within a 15-mile radius of our office in Lititz in Lancaster County, PA. Landis at Home provides these in-home services through our highly trained in-home caregivers, companions/homemakers, housekeepers and drivers. Learn more at landisathome.org

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