

JULY 2026



DISABILITY PRIDE MONTH

July is the anniversary of the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act. It is a time to celebrate the disability community, promote inclusion, and raise awareness about the experiences and contributions of individuals in our country with disabilities.

Learn more: ada.gov

SLEEP AWARENESS

Sleep is an important part of your overall health. Get more information about healthy sleep habits.

Learn more: thensf.org

UV SAFETY

The summer brings with it more time in the sun. Take time out to learn techniques to minimize the risk of sun exposure.

Learn more: cdc.gov/skin-cancer and cdc.gov/cancer/skin/basic_info/sun-safety

SOCIAL WELLNESS MONTH

Social wellness refers to how you interact with others, express yourself and build connections in your community. Healthy social habits help you build support systems and enhance your physical and mental health.

Learn more: nih.gov/health-information

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What are Cognitive Diseases?



Cognitive diseases affect how we think, remember and behave. They can be caused by genetics, lifestyle or injuries, and can significantly impact a person's quality of life. Some of the common cognitive diseases are Alzheimer's disease, dementia and traumatic brain injury (TBI). Diseases like these can cause changes in how you think, either slowly over time or suddenly all at once.

Dementia is a broad term describing a decline in brain function. It includes symptoms like memory loss, difficulty with communication and other thinking problems. Dementia is a condition with many causes. Common signs of dementia include struggling with daily tasks, feeling confused, and experiencing mood or behavior changes.

Alzheimer's is a type of dementia that accounts for 60-80% of dementia cases. It typically starts with memory loss and can worsen over time, affecting communication, awareness and mood. Over 7 million people aged 65 and older in the U.S. live with Alzheimer's. While the exact causes are still unknown, research suggests a mix of genetic, environmental and lifestyle factors contribute to its development.

Traumatic brain injury (TBI) occurs when a head injury disrupts normal brain function. TBIs can be mild to severe with effects that may show up right away or over time. It can also cause physical, emotional and mental symptoms. Although TBI isn't a form of dementia, it can increase the risk of developing dementia later in life.

These conditions are distinct but related. Understanding their differences and complexities can help you navigate the challenges they present more effectively and take actions now to prevent them from developing later in your life.

RESOURCES FOR CAREGIVERS

Are you a caregiver of someone with a cognitive impairment? Caregivers of people with cognitive impairment can access various resources to support their caregiving journey. Organizations like the Alzheimer's Association and the National Institute on Aging offer educational materials, support groups and online resources to help caregivers navigate the challenges of caregiving. Local community centers, healthcare providers and online forums can also provide valuable connections and guidance. These resources can help caregivers develop coping strategies, manage caregiving responsibilities and maintain their own well-being.

Learn more:
alz.org/help-support/caregiving

Learn more: dementiasociety.org/definitions and
alz.org/news/2025/alzheimers-brain-awareness-month-june

Taking care of your brain

To promote better brain health and reduce the risk of cognitive diseases, consider incorporating these tips into your daily routine:

Lifestyle modifications

- **Regular exercise:** Do at least 150 minutes of moderate exercise each week. This includes walking, cycling or swimming.
- **Social engagement:** Stay in touch with friends and family and do things to build and keep relationships.
- **Stress management:** Practice stress-reducing techniques like meditation, yoga or deep breathing exercises.
- **Adequate sleep:** Aim for 7-9 hours of sleep each night to help clear your brain and consolidate memories.

Dietary changes

- **Balanced diet:** Focus on consuming a variety of whole foods, including fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean proteins and healthy fats.
- **Omega-3 rich foods:** Include foods high in omega-3 fatty acids, such as salmon, walnuts and chia seeds, in your diet.
- **Antioxidant-rich foods:** Eat foods rich in antioxidants, like berries, leafy greens and other fruits and vegetables.
- **Limit processed foods:** Minimize your intake of processed and high-sugar foods that can negatively impact brain health.

Cognitive training and stimulation

- **Mental stimulation:** Engage in activities that challenge your brain, such as reading, puzzles or learning a new skill.
- **Cognitive training:** Consider participating in cognitive training programs or brain games that target specific cognitive skills.
- **Lifelong learning:** Pursue opportunities for continued learning and personal growth to keep your brain active and engaged.

Additional tips

- **Manage long-term health:** Manage long-term health conditions, like diabetes, high blood pressure and heart disease to lower the risk of losing memory.
- **Stay hydrated:** Drink plenty of water throughout the day to stay hydrated and support brain function.
- **Limit alcohol consumption:** Drink alcohol in moderation, as excessive consumption can negatively impact brain health.

By using these tips every day, you can make small changes to help your brain stay healthy and reduce the chance of brain diseases.

Learn more: [mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/healthy-aging](https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/healthy-aging)

The MIND Diet

You're likely familiar with diets that promote heart health, but have you considered the MIND diet? The MIND diet, or Mediterranean-DASH Intervention for Neurodegenerative Delay, is a carefully made mix of the Mediterranean and DASH diets meant to promote brain health. It is designed to help brain health and reduce the risk of cognitive decline. By adhering to the MIND diet for approximately five years, research suggests that you can lower your Alzheimer's disease risk by up to 53%. The diet focuses on eating foods that have a lot of nutrients, like whole grains, greens, berries, nuts, beans, olive oil and fish. These foods are known to reduce inflammation and oxidative stress, which are important factors that are thought to cause neurodegeneration. [Learn more: hucihealth.org/blog](https://www.hucihealth.org/blog)

FETA AND PEPPER EGG BITES



These baked egg bites are a delicious, protein-packed option for a quick and easy breakfast on the go!

Makes 6 servings.

Ingredients:

- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup diced onion
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon salt, divided
- 1 medium red bell pepper, diced
- 1 tablespoon finely chopped fresh oregano
- 8 large eggs
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup crumbled feta cheese
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup low-fat milk
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon ground pepper
- 2 cups chopped fresh spinach
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup sliced Kalamata olives

Directions:

Before you begin, wash your hands.

1. Preheat oven to 325°F.
2. Heat 2 tablespoons of oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add $\frac{3}{4}$ cup onion and $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon salt; cook, stirring occasionally, until starting to soften, about 3 minutes. Add diced bell pepper and 1 tablespoon oregano; cook, stirring, until the vegetables are tender and starting to brown, 4 to 5 minutes more. Remove from heat and let cool for 5 minutes.
3. Whisk 8 eggs, $\frac{3}{4}$ cup feta, $\frac{1}{2}$ cup milk, $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon pepper and the remaining $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon salt in a large bowl. Stir in 2 cups spinach, $\frac{1}{4}$ cup olives and the vegetable mixture, including any residual oil. Liberally coat a 12-cup muffin tin with cooking spray. Divide the egg mixture among the prepared muffin cups (about $\frac{1}{4}$ cup each).
4. Bake until firm to the touch, 25 to 30 minutes. Let it stand for 5 minutes before removing from the tin.

NUTRITION INFORMATION

Calories per serving	226
Sodium	466 mg
Fat	17 g
Saturated Fat	6 g
Carbohydrates	32 g
Cholesterol	266 mg
Protein	13g
Total Sugars	4 mg

Source: [eatingwell.com](https://www.eatingwell.com)

The Six Points of Connection



Social connection is a key factor in your health, happiness and longevity. The United States Chamber of Connection created six points of connection to help people better understand and strengthen their social bonds. These points are based on research from fields like psychology, healthcare, sociology and urban planning. They focus on important parts of social connections like safety, emotional bonding and civic engagement. This research-based approach helps individuals and communities take action to create deeper social connections.

The Six Points of Connection:

1. **Neighborhood contact.** Knowing your neighbors builds a sense of belonging and security. Building relationships with the people living around you strengthens your social connections and creates a safer, more welcoming home environment. These neighborly connections can contribute to your overall wellbeing and community strength.
2. **Community of identity.** Joining a community with a shared identity creates deep, meaningful connections. Connecting with people who share similar backgrounds, interests or experiences builds safety, understanding and support.
3. **One-on-one relationships.** Regular connections with family members or friends are a fundamental part of your social wellness. Mutually engaged and empathetic connections can provide mental and emotional support.
4. **Third place.** The term 'third place' refers to a social environment that fosters casual social interactions. Third places are not home or work, but a place like a cafe, library, gym, community center or park where individuals can casually interact and build relationships with one another.
5. **Community of play.** These activity-based communities gather around shared interests or hobbies and can help you build a shared sense of purpose with those around you. Connection in an activity-based group is built through doing something together like sports, crafts or volunteering.
6. **Community service.** Engaging in community service like volunteering, mutual aid or civic organizations not only strengthens personal wellbeing but supports the broader community. By engaging in community service, you can foster meaningful relationships while contributing to the greater good.

Source: [Chamber of Connection](#)

Finding Belonging in Your Community

Having a sense of belonging to a community is an important part of wellbeing. As social creatures, people regularly label themselves and others based on groups, communities and identities they are a part of. Everyone is a member of a family, a sporting team or fan base, a spiritual or religious group, a political party or a nationality, among others. Almost every aspect of your identity and daily life is shaped around belonging to something larger than yourself.

Feeling a sense of belonging in your community ensures you feel supported and less alone, and helps you better manage stress, anxiety and your overall emotional wellbeing. It also reinforces your own resilience and support systems, which can help you better cope with life's challenges.

Feeling lonely from time to time is a natural part of life, especially during major transitions like moving or changing jobs. When that sense of disconnection shows up, reconnecting with communities that matter to you can be a powerful step toward rebuilding a sense of belonging.

Source: [Mayo Clinic Health System](#)

Strategies for Building and Maintaining Healthy Relationships

Healthy relationships are an important part of your mental and physical wellbeing, but creating and nurturing them can be challenging, as it's easy to let life get in the way. Here are some helpful tips for building new relationships:

- **Go to community-based events.** Look for groups or clubs centered around your interests or hobbies, such as a running club, trivia night or watch parties of your favorite sports teams or shows.
- **Give and accept invitations.** Invite a new friend to join you for coffee or a walk. When you're invited to an event, say yes even if you don't know the people very well.
- **Take up a new hobby or interest.** Find a shared space where you can learn a new hobby while meeting new people. For example, take a class at your local community college, join a fitness studio or gym, or enroll in an art class.
- **Volunteer in your community.** Not only is it a meaningful way to give back and feel good about your impact, but it'll also allow you to connect with like-minded people who share your interests and values.

Established relationships take maintenance. Here are some tips to support your relationships:

- **Get to know yourself.** Spend some time engaging in personal reflection. Being in touch with your own emotions will help you better express your feelings to others.
- **Put in the work.** Healthy relationships take effort and maintenance. A healthy relationship takes commitment and a willingness to accommodate each other's schedules and needs.
- **Set and respect boundaries.** Boundaries are an important part of any healthy relationship. Setting boundaries helps you communicate how you like to be treated by others, which can lead to a stronger relationship and connection.
- **Talk and listen.** Sharing your experiences and listening to others is foundational to any relationship. Express your feelings honestly and vulnerably and listen genuinely to others when they do the same.
- **Reflect and learn.** Reflecting on the relationships that are most important in your life can provide a good roadmap for you to build other relationships. Ask yourself what qualities these relationships have, why they work and how you can implement those strategies with others.

Source: [Mental Health Foundation](#)

Fostering Connection Through Community Engagement

Connecting with others through community engagement not only strengthens your social ties and mental health, but it can also help you build a sense of purpose. Giving your time to local causes in your community can help you meet people outside your usual circle and gain new perspectives. These shared experiences create a resilient social network that supports everyone involved. Engaging with your community is a great way to build a larger sense of purpose and foster your local connections.

Your wellbeing thrives when you focus on something larger than yourself. Helping others has proven to release stress and boost your mood in ways that solo activities cannot. By participating in local events, you invest in the community where you live and work. This active involvement fosters a culture of belonging and mutual respect.

You can build these relationships through simple activities. Consider these options as opportunities for you to foster connection through community engagement:

- Volunteer at a local food bank to support neighbors.
- Join a neighborhood cleanup to improve shared spaces.
- Mentor students to share your professional skills.
- Participate in a charity run to promote fitness and giving.
- Donate supplies to schools or shelters in your area.

Source: [Chamber of Connection](#)

Easy Grilled Shrimp Tacos with Mango Avocado Salsa



These grilled shrimp tacos are ready in just under 30 minutes and are a great weeknight dinner recipe throughout the summer months!

Makes 4 servings.

Ingredients:

For the Shrimp:

- 1 pound medium raw shrimp, peeled and deveined with tails removed and patted dry
- 1 tablespoon avocado oil or olive oil
- 2 teaspoons chili powder
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- ½ teaspoon garlic powder
- ¼ teaspoon onion powder
- ¼ teaspoon ancho chili powder (can sub with regular chili powder)
- ½ teaspoon salt

For the Mango-Avocado Salsa:

- 1 medium avocado, diced
- 1 cup fresh mango
- ¼ cup fresh cilantro, chopped
- ¼ cup red onion, finely chopped
- 1 garlic clove, minced or grated
- ½ small jalapeno, finely minced
- 2 tablespoons lime juice
- Salt to taste

For serving:

- 8 corn tortillas
- 1 cup shredded red cabbage or coleslaw mix
- ¼ cup crumbled cotija cheese

Directions:

1. Preheat the grill to medium-high heat (375-400°F).
2. In a medium bowl, toss shrimp with oil. Set aside.
3. In a small bowl, combine chili powder, cumin, garlic powder, onion powder, ancho chili powder and salt. Sprinkle over the shrimp and toss to coat.
4. To make the salsa, combine the avocado, mango, cilantro, onion, jalapeno and lime juice. Gently fold to combine. Taste and season with salt as desired. Refrigerate until ready to serve.
5. Thread the shrimp on skewers and place skewers on the grill grate. Cook for 2-3 minutes on each side or until shrimp are cooked through.
6. Remove the shrimp from grill and divide among the tortillas. Top each taco with shredded cabbage, Mango-Avocado salsa and cotija cheese.

NUTRITION INFORMATION

Calories per serving	315
Sodium	650 mg
Fat	10 g
Saturated Fat	1 g
Carbohydrates	38 g
Protein	21 g
Total Sugars	9 g
Fiber	7g

Source: [Real Food Dieticians](#)