

Things to remember

- We can all look after our brain and assist it to continue to function well.
- Being forgetful is not always a sign of having dementia.
- See your Doctor, Aboriginal Medical Service or Aboriginal Health Worker if you have concerns about your or someone else's memory.
- Although dementia is more common as people get older; dementia is **not** a normal part of ageing.
- There are different types of dementia.
- Dementia is a brain disease which the person has no control over.
- Help is available for you and your community.

Keeping your brain healthy

We can all contribute to keeping our brain healthier by:

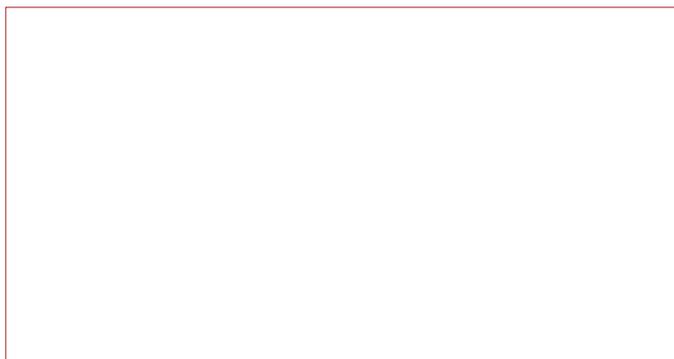
1. Regular daily exercise.
2. Wearing protective head gear when participating in impact sports or activities.
3. Keeping our brain active and helping it to grow by doing new and stimulating things.
4. Participating in activities with others and helping our community.
5. Eating healthy (natural) food.
6. Giving up smoking.
7. Drinking alcohol in moderation (or not at all).
8. Having a regular visit with your doctor or health nurse (who checks weight, cholesterol and blood sugar).



What to do if you are worried about your memory or worried about someone else you care for:

SOME IMPORTANT LOCAL RESOURCES

Your Koori Dementia Care Project (KDCCP) Team



Alzheimer's Australia - National Dementia Hotline

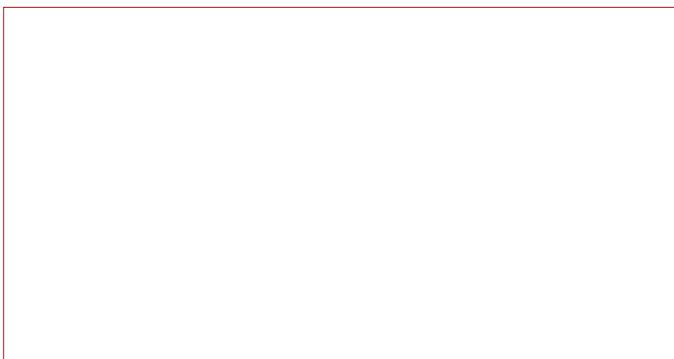
Phone: 1800 100 500

Carers Australia

Phone: 1800 242 636

Other important numbers to remember:

(You might like to write down your Aboriginal Medical Service or Doctors name; or other services or people who may assist you)



The brain and dementia



Koori
Dementia
CARE PROJECT

:: Funded by Ageing Disability and Home Care ::
Supported by Neuroscience Research Australia and the Dementia Collaborative
Research Centre: Assessment & Better Care



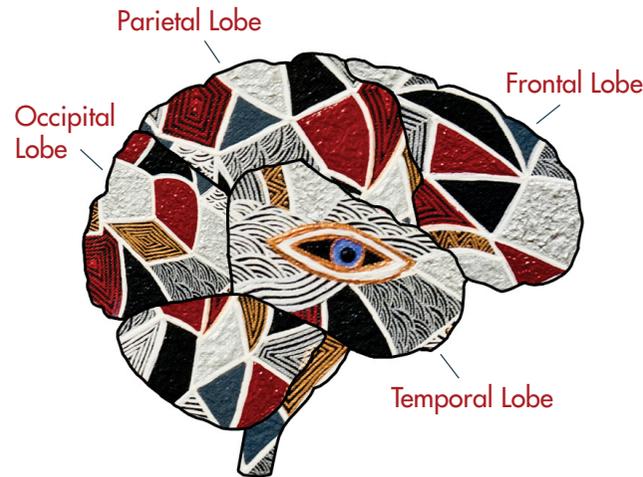
Your brain is very important

The brain is the control centre for your body and it sits in your skull at the top of your spinal cord. The brain gets messages from your senses by seeing, hearing, tasting, smelling, touching and moving. The messages travel from nerve cells all over the body. They travel along nerve fibres to nerve cells in the brain called neurons.

Your brain keeps on growing until you are about 20 years old. Humans continue to make new neurons throughout the whole life cycle in response to mental activity.

The brain is divided into different parts called lobes and each lobe does special things. If any part of the brain is sick or damaged it will not be able to do the work that is required by that area.

“Feeling the sensation of walking on the land, the experience of being touched by someone you love, the sound of a baby crying and the feeling of belonging to a family and community are all made possible because of **your brain.”**



If the disease is in the **Frontal Lobe:**

- the person may be unmotivated
- they may have problems planning and organising activities
- they may do things that are inappropriate

If the disease is in the **Temporal Lobe:**

- the person may forget people and events
- recent memories may be lost
- they may ask the same question repeatedly

If the disease is in the **Parietal Lobe:**

- the person may have problems saying what they want to say
- they may have problems finding their way around
- they be unable to recognise family members

If the disease is in the **Occipital Lobe:**

- the person may see things that are not real (hallucinations)
- their vision may be affected



Memory is very important to all of us in how we live our day-to-day life.

- It's normal to forget things once in a while.
- Some of us get more forgetful as we age.
- It may take longer to learn new things, remember certain words, or find our glasses.
- These changes are often signs of mild forgetfulness, not serious memory problems.
- Forgetting how to find your way home, the names of friends and family or how to do everyday tasks, may be signs of a more serious problem.

What to do

- Talk to your family member, carer or health worker.
- Ask them to go with you to see your doctor, AMS or health worker if you're worried about your forgetfulness.
- Be sure to make a follow-up appointment to check your memory in the next six months to a year.

Dementia

Sometimes some of these memory changes may take place because of dementia. There are different types of dementia. All types are characterised by some change in our memory, some change in our judgment or planning and some difference in the way we function.

Although dementia occurs more often as people age, it is **not** a part of normal ageing. Unfortunately dementia can also occur in younger people.

