

# PROTECTING OUR BRAINS FROM INJURY, ILLNESS AND TOXINS



Taking care of our brains is crucial to our overall well-being. To nurture our brains, we must provide them with the proper fuel, move our bodies, challenge our minds, rest, and manage our stress levels. And ensure we do not injure them with falls, illness, or toxins that could lead to damage.

Illnesses and injuries can have a significant impact on our lives, both in the short and long term. It's important to remember that many of these incidents can be prevented. Exposure to toxic chemicals can also be harmful, disrupting healthy brain function and potentially leading to the development of neurodegenerative diseases in the future.

## *Falling is Never Allowed - Preventing Falls & Injuries*

As we get older, preventing falls becomes increasingly important. Fortunately, there are several ways to decrease the risk of taking a tumble. First, get a balance screening and make sure to keep up with regular visits to your healthcare provider. Discuss any falling concerns you may have along with medications, blood pressure, gait/balance, sensory impairments, and hazards that can increase your risk of falling. It's also important to get your eyes checked annually to maintain good vision.

Exercise is another crucial component of fall prevention. Focus on strengthening and balance training. Consider working out with a friend to make it more enjoyable. Finally, make your living space safer by installing grab bars in your bathroom, clearing away clutter from your floors, avoiding rugs, watching out for children's toys and pets, and adding railings to any steps. Good lighting is also essential!

If you enjoy riding bikes or playing contact sports, wear protective gear like a helmet. Lastly, always buckle up when in the car – it's a simple step that can make a big difference in preventing injury in the event of an accident.

## Beat the Cold & Flu:

### Tips for Preventing Illnesses & Protecting Others from Illnesses

- Prevent illness by avoiding being in close quarters with those who are sick.
  - Stay home if you are not feeling well.
- Make sure you cover your cough or sneeze.
- Wash Your Hands - 20 seconds or longer.
  - Pro Tip: Use a paper towel or clean towel to dry hands and to open the bathroom door to limit additional exposure to germs.
- Avoid touching your face.
- Clean and disinfect your most touched objects and surfaces.
- Practice Self-Care: Limit stress, stay hydrated to help your body fight off illnesses, quality fuel and nutrition, make sure you are getting enough physical exercise, and ensure you are getting a good night's sleep.

### Neurotoxins and the Brain

- Toxic gases and chemical exposure can disrupt healthy brain function, impact behavior, and may lead to long-term neurodegenerative disease.
- All brains, especially developing ones, are vulnerable to food additives and chemicals.
- Toxic substances can disrupt the nervous system, damaging or killing nerve cells that transmit signals in the brain and nervous system.
- Potential sources of exposure include chemotherapy, radiation, heavy metals, certain foods, pesticides, and cosmetics.
- Symptoms may include limb weakness, memory loss, and headache.



### Alcohol and the Brain

- Heavy drinking can lead to loss of brain volume (shrinkage) and areas affected where our brain regions control skills like attention, language, memory, and reasoning.
- Heavy drinking can also speed up memory loss with the possibility of developing Dementia.

Visit [www.braincentergb.org](http://www.braincentergb.org)

for more information about protecting our brains.

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