

Brain Awareness Week

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Washington, DC - Each year organizations across the United States reach out to raise awareness of the human brain and its functions. In support of that effort, here are a few key facts to share and a source of further resources.

The Three-Pound Marvel

Within the human brain are roughly a billion nerve cells, billions more “support” cells, and a hundred trillion or more synaptic connections linking them all together.

Don't Be Fooled by Its Size

The brain accounts for only two percent of our body weight, but consumes 20 percent of the oxygen we breathe and 20 percent of the energy we take in.

One Task at a Time

The brain's capacity for processing more than one task simultaneously is limited. The brain can't boost its processing power based on how many things we're trying to do at once.

Pulling All-Nighters Not Recommended

Sleeping within 30 hours of new learning seems to be essential; “slow-wave” sleep—a type of non-REM sleep that generally occurs early in the night—is crucial to learning.

Physical Fitness is Part of Cognitive Fitness

Increasing your level of physical activity is one of the best things you can do for you brain; it can enhance memory and learning, improve mood, and counteract depression. Just a half hour of moderate activity per day will help.

Your Brain Needs a Social Life

Studies have shown that being socially connected is one of the fundamental tenants of brain health. Likewise, social isolation is associated with health problems and a shorter lifespan.

Wait, What Was That Again?

As we get older, it may take us longer to learn and store new information, so concentration becomes increasingly important. Try to reduce distractions and minimize interferences when learning new information.

Learn more at: <http://www.dana.org/Publications/Details.aspx?id=43492#sthash.LK1YYTh5.dpuf>

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