



## The Doctor Will See You Now 10 Tips for a Healthier Brain



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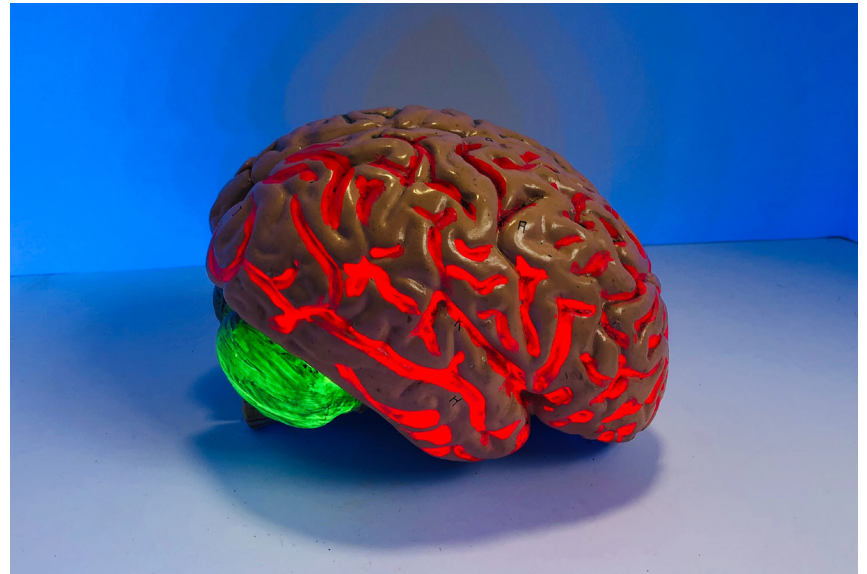
About 43,000 New Mexicans age 65 or older suffer from Alzheimer's disease, according to the New Mexico chapter of the Alzheimer's Association. One of the most common forms of dementia, Alzheimer's is a progressive disease that begins with memory loss and can potentially lead to the inability to converse and respond to the environment.

Because Alzheimer's can seriously impact a person's ability to carry out daily activities, the disease's reach extends beyond the patient, impacting 85,000 unpaid caregivers in the state. The number of New Mexico residents afflicted is projected to increase 23 percent

to 53,000 people by 2025, as the population ages. Symptoms of the disease tend to appear after age 60, the risk increasing with age. Beyond the age of 65, the number of people living with this disease doubles every five years. While less common, young people can also get Alzheimer's disease.

Though there is no cure, there is increasing evidence showing that adopting healthy lifestyle behaviors may increase brain health and possibly reduce the risk of subjective cognitive decline later in life. Optum New Mexico has recently partnered with the New Mexico chapter of the Alzheimer's Association to help increase awareness of the disease and to encourage residents to discuss with their primary care physician preventive measures that may help protect the brain.

According to the Alzheimer's Association, it's never too late or too



early to incorporate healthy habits into your daily lifestyle. Here is a list of their Top 10:

### 1. Break a sweat

Engage in regular cardiovascular exercise that elevates your heart rate and increases blood flow to the brain and body. Several studies

have found an association between physical activity and reduced risk of cognitive decline.

### 2. Hit the books

Formal education in any stage of life will help reduce your risk of cognitive decline and dementia. For

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