

## Sharpen Your Mind in 2012!

Did you know that you can improve your mind and your memory? Here are a few mental fitness reminders that will benefit you in a number of ways: boost memory, enhance creativity and refine focus.

### Activities that benefit your intelligence:

- Learn a musical instrument
- Study a foreign language
- Meditate
- Practice yoga
- Take a dance class
- Play chess or other challenging board games
- Learn a complex skill, such as painting
- Learn to juggle

### Feed your brain for mental performance:

- Eggs
- Blueberries
- Salmon (wild)
- Avocados
- Nuts and seeds
- Whole grains

### Move for your brain:

- Strength train for an hour three times a week (improves memory as you age)
- High intensity workouts, two 30-minute sessions a week

### Mix it up!

- Use your non-dominant hand to brush your teeth or write
- Wear ear plugs while doing different tasks
- Turn photos on your desk upside down for an hour
- Listen to music you have a hard time keeping the beat to

### Brain sharpening ideas:

- Learning something new? Quit cramming - space your study sessions far enough apart so you have to work to remember the last one.
- Change the scenery - study and review your notes in new environments: home, office, couch, coffee shop, park bench.

### Oxygen and food breaks:

- Your brain needs fresh oxygen to perform. Every hour take 3 long, slow deep breaths - all the way down into your belly. Pretend that you are blowing on a spoon full of hot soup as you exhale.
- Your brain also needs glucose every 2.5 to 3.5 hours to stay mentally sharp. Lean protein, complex carbs, good fats, just 150 calories or so - string cheese, an apple, a handful of almonds.

### Give your brain a rest:

- Gratitude and meditation give the brain mini-breaks.