



Prairie Faith Parish Nurse News~~June 2022

Body

Mind

Spirit

June is Brain Health Awareness Month~~Love your Brain!

Growing evidence indicates that people can reduce their risk of cognitive decline by adopting key lifestyle habits.

Exercise regularly. Exercise increases the number of tiny blood vessels that bring oxygen-rich blood to the region of the brain that is responsible for thought. Exercise also spurs the development of new nerve cells and increases the connections between brain cells (*synapses*). Exercise also lowers blood pressure, improves cholesterol levels, helps blood sugar balance, helps manage body weight, and reduces mental stress--all of which can help your brain as well as your heart health.

Exercise your brain. Researchers have found that brain activities stimulate new connections between nerve cells and may even help the brain generate new cells, developing neurological plasticity and building up a functional reserve that provides a hedge against future cell loss. Read, take courses, do word puzzles, jigsaw puzzles or math problems. Experiment with things that require manual dexterity as well as mental effort, such as drawing, painting, and crafts.

Eat a healthy diet including vegetables (especially green leafy), whole grains, quality protein, berries, beans, and healthy fats, and avoid sugary foods/drinks, fried foods and processed foods. Healthy foods promote healthy arteries that carry oxygen to the brain, and foods high in antioxidants help fight inflammation.

Avoid tobacco in all forms. Nicotine is associated with increased cognitive decline and risk of dementia, loss of brain volume, and increased risk for stroke.

Limit or avoid alcohol. Recent study findings at the University of Pennsylvania show that even light alcohol use is associated with changes in brain structure and size.

Get adequate sleep. Not getting quality sleep due to conditions such as insomnia or sleep apnea may result in problems with memory and thinking.

Take care of your emotional health. Manage stress and anxiety, and seek treatment for depression. Pursue social activities that are meaningful to you. Find ways to be part of your local community—there are lots of volunteer opportunities within Prairie Faith! Make a new friend or renew an old friendship.

Try yoga. Research correlates yoga and improved brain health multiple ways—through stress reduction, providing exercise for both your brain and your entire body, and offering social connections. Prairie Faith Yoga meets at the WaKeeney Public Library on Mondays at 4:00 p.m.—contact Donna Deines or Margaret Schmitt for more information about joining the group.

Heads up! Brain injury can raise risk of cognitive decline and dementia. Wear a seat belt and use a helmet when playing contact sports or riding a bike.

When possible, combine these habits to achieve maximum benefit for the brain and body. Start now!

It's never too late or too early to incorporate healthy habits!

(Sources of information included: Alzheimer's Association, Harvard Health, and Penn Today 2022)





Everyone is invited to join Pastor Jon this summer on Tuesday evenings at 6:30 p.m. at Bethlehem as we take a look each week at the lessons for the upcoming Sundays! The start date is Tuesday, June 28, 2022, and the group will meet in the library in the south educational wing at the church, which is handicap-accessible. Contact Pastor Jon or Nancy with any questions, and we hope to see you on Tuesday evenings as we strengthen our spirits through Bible study and fellowship!



A prayer shawl is a tangible gift representing the many and continuing prayers for comfort, caring, healing and love offered for an individual experiencing a difficult time for various reasons, serious illness, grief, loss, emotional trials or spiritual upheaval in their lives. If you know of someone in the community who might be comforted by receiving a prayer shawl or blanket, please contact Nancy. There are several options for delivery of a prayer shawl to your friend or family member—you may

gift one yourself, give one to someone else to deliver for you, or you can request that Nancy deliver one. If you enjoy sewing, knitting or crocheting and would like more information about making a prayer shawl, there are patterns at Bethlehem, patterns and ideas can be found online, or Nancy can answer any questions you may have. Many thanks to all of those who have shared their time and talent making prayer shawls to comfort others! ♥



Luther's Morning Prayer

In the morning when you get up, make the sign of the holy cross and say: In the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

I thank You, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have kept me this night from all harm and danger; and I pray that You would keep me this day also from sin and every evil, that all my doings and life may please You. For into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me. Amen.

Then go joyfully to your work, singing a hymn, like that of the Ten Commandments, or whatever your devotion may suggest.

Luther's Evening Prayer

In the evening when you go to bed, make the sign of the holy cross and say: In the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

I thank You, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have graciously kept me this day; and I pray that You would forgive me all my sins where I have done wrong, and graciously keep me this night. For into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me. Amen.

Then go to sleep at once and in good cheer.



The parish nurse ministry serves the community, regardless of any church affiliation. Feel free to call or email to: schedule a confidential appointment to discuss your health/wellness questions, schedule transportation to a medical/dental/counseling appointment if you need a ride, request a prayer shawl for someone in the community going through a difficult time, locate community health resources, request other parish nurse work, or discuss your ideas for the health ministry! 😊

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785-769-4731 (leave a message, please)