

Box 3. Twelve actions for a healthier brain at any age

- 1** **Be physically active each day.** Reduce sedentary time and move more. This can include all types of physical activities, including walking, running, weightlifting, gardening, yoga, tai chi, swimming, dancing, biking, team sports and yard work.
- 2** **Protect your heart.** Monitor your blood pressure, cholesterol and diabetes closely. What's good for the heart is also good for the brain.
- 3** **Stay socially active.** Make sure to be engaged with friends and family. Maintain your social network and stay connected.
- 4** **Manage your medical conditions.** Keep on top of your overall health. This is directly linked to your brain health and your ability to avoid dementia as you get older.
- 5** **Challenge your thinking.** Take on mental leisure activities that you enjoy. Always try to learn new things, no matter what your age.
- 6** **Get a good night's sleep every night.** Try to sleep over 6 to 8 hours each night to help maintain your brain health.
- 7** **Have depression treated.** Remember that depression is more than just feeling down. Seek help to improve the functioning of your brain.
- 8** **Avoid excessive alcohol intake.** Limit your intake of wine, beer and other alcoholic beverages.
- 9** **Maintain your hearing.** Use hearing aids if you need them. Protect your hearing from loud noises.
- 10** **Find meaning in life.** Find a purpose to get out of bed each day. This is associated with better brain health and reduced dementia risk.
- 11** **Avoid all types of head injury.** Steer clear of activities where you might put your brain at risk of harm.
- 12** **Adopt healthy behaviours.** Make healthy food choices, reduce avoidable stress, quit or reduce smoking, and get regular check-ups with your doctor. All these actions will positively affect your brain health.