

August 29, 2014



Share the Wellness Tip

Forget About It?

Your brain changes as you get older, along with the rest of your body. The result can be a gradual decline in episodic memory (responsible for such day-to-day details as the location of that missing phone or car) and learning ability.

As we grow older, we experience physiological changes. It takes longer to learn and recall information. We're not as quick as we used to be. In fact, we often mistake this slowing of our mental processes for true memory loss. But in most cases, if we give ourselves time, the information will come to mind.

Understanding the causes of memory loss and the difference between mild forgetfulness and more serious memory conditions can help you sharpen your memory and dull your anxiety.

Causes

In addition to increasing years, everyday memory loss can be caused by medication side effects; depression, anxiety and stress; or thyroid, liver, and kidney disorders. If you believe these issues could be causing memory problems, talk to your health care provider.

Self-Care

Try these tips for improving memory:

-  Avoid distractions when you're trying to learn something new.
-  Exercise regularly to keep your body and your brain healthy.
-  Use a weekly calendar and daily to-do list to help you stay on track.
-  Try not to deviate from your normal routine for taking medication or leaving for work.
-  Use associations by relating it to something that you already know. Picture a fish to recall Mrs. Trout's name.
-  Put your phone, wallet, keys, and other items in the same place every time.

The key difference between simple memory lapses and memory problems such as dementia is the degree to which the impairment disrupts your work, social life, and ability to function independently. If you're worried about your memory, see your doctor.

Sources: American Psychological Association; National Institute on Aging

