

# Brain Fitness Facts

## Expert Tips On Keeping Mentally Fit

(NAPSA)—Experts agree that total fitness includes mental fitness. That's because a healthy mind can help you pursue all the things you love to do, whether it's organizing activities for your family and friends, pursuing a new hobby or even learning a new language. Recently, a group of experts from various relevant fields participated in a Cognitive Health Roundtable.

According to these experts, there are four pillars of cognitive health: nutrition, physical activity, sleep, and cognitive exercise. Here are some tips to help keep your mind alive and active—whatever your age:

- **Nutrition:** Dr. Thomas Shea, University of Massachusetts Lowell, said that in addition to eating a healthy, well-balanced diet, supplements may be needed to complement healthy eating patterns and to ensure adequate nutrition. Dr. Ruth Remington, University of Massachusetts Lowell, reported that research suggests that certain nutrients—such as folate, vitamin B12 and vitamin E—and antioxidants may help protect and support healthy brain function and memory.

- **Physical Activity:** Dr. Erin Snook, University of Massachusetts Amherst, said that keeping the body active often results in a more active mind. Adults should strive to be physically active for 30 minutes three or more days a week.

- **Sleep:** Experts agree that striving for an average of seven to eight hours of quality sleep daily is important for maintaining a sharp mind. According to Dr. Jeffrey Ellenbogen, Harvard Medical



**Lifestyle habits such as eating healthy, exercising your mind and body regularly, and getting enough sleep keep your mind sharp.**

School, putting your brain and body to sleep is not like putting your computer to sleep. Sleep is an active, rich and complex biological process that works to improve your cognitive function.

- **Cognitive Exercise:** Just as it's important to exercise the body, it's also important to exercise the mind. John Gabrieli, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, described the benefits of finding new and challenging things to do that stretch you beyond the daily norm. He argued for continually challenging the mind with crossword puzzles, games and new hobbies that help the mind stay sharp and active.

The roundtable was sponsored by Nature Made®, the nation's No. 1 best-selling brand of vitamins, minerals, herbs and supplements in the food, drug, mass and club channels. The supplement company is considered a pioneer in the area of cognitive health. For more information, visit [www.naturemade.com](http://www.naturemade.com).