



Brain Fitness

The term brain fitness reflects a hypothesis that cognitive abilities can be maintained or improved by exercising the brain, the analogy being used reflects the same usage of exercise to keep the body fit. There remains strong evidence that aspects of the brain structure remain plastic throughout life, and that high levels of mental activity are associated with reduced risks of age-related dementia scientific literature, but it commonly used in the context of self-help books and commercial products.

Brain fitness can therefore be seen as the capacity of a person to meet the tremendous amount of cognitive demands in life. It can be seen as an ability to assimilate information, comprehend relationships, and develop reasonable conclusions and plans. Brain fitness can be engaged and developed through formal educational processes, being actively mentally engaged in life constantly learning, and exercises designed to challenge cognitive abilities and/or skills.

Brain fitness is not just promoted by doing exercises with the brain but is also promoted through healthy lifestyle habits such as mental stimulation, physical exercise, good nutrition, stress management, and sleep. Things which decrease brain fitness are listed below:

- Chronic stress
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Ageing
- Decreasing oestrogen
- Excess oxytocin
- Prolonged cortisol.

Specific activities that are presumed to promote brain fitness include:

- Activities that involve planning ahead, such as chess or crossword puzzles which stimulate the frontal lobe area of the brain
- Activities like ballroom dancing and basketball which train the short range spatial skills, which are also used when one walks through a short limited space, like the interior of a house
- Activities like learning a new language or painting requires the coordination of multiple regions in the brain
- Physical exercise.