



BRAIN HEALTH BOOST



Resolve to Protect Your Brain Health

*The Brain Health Initiative (BHI) is working to develop brain healthy communities, creating a culture that promotes brain health protective factors and decreases risk factors, thereby improving brain health, optimizing brain performance, and preventing and fighting brain illness across the lifespan for the Florida Suncoast region and beyond. **When making your New Year's resolutions for 2022, why not resolve to promote and protect your brain health?***

Tomorrow is New Year's Eve and many of us are filled with a sense of déjà vu: we're still in the midst of a global pandemic and our country continues to be at odds over, well, everything. As we make our resolutions for 2022, perhaps we should focus on things that make us happier.

New Year's resolutions often focus on our bodies: eating better, exercising more, and losing weight. This year, the BHI encourages everyone to resolve to boost your brain health in 2022. Promoting and protecting your brain health can improve brain function and memory, lower the risk of developing Alzheimer's disease and other dementias, prevent stroke, reduce stress, and improve your mood. All these things increase your sense of well-being and have the potential to make you happy.

In our [Brain BOOST: Creating New Habits](#) we talked about the best way to make and keep your resolutions is to create new habits. Habits are born in the brain and forming new habits requires developing new pathways, or neurocircuits, for these behaviors. If the new habit makes you happy, it activates the reward system in your brain which motivates you to continue that behavior.

It stands to reason that if your resolutions make you happy, you'll add these habits to your routine. But wait, there is an additional bonus to resolving to be brain healthy. In addition to making you happier, many of the ways in which you can improve your brain health also help you eat better, exercise more, and lose weight. Resolving to be brain healthy in 2022 may help you finally achieve all those resolutions you have been unable to keep.

Everyone here at the BHI wishes you a Happy and Brain Healthy New Year.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TODAY TO PROTECT YOUR BRAIN HEALTH

For your Brain Healthy Resolutions, we recommend protecting your brain health by **BEING BRAIN HEALTHY and adopting a lifestyle** that includes thoughts, behaviors, emotions, responses, and language that promote these brain health protective factors.

- **Stress resilience.** Breathe. *Action:* Learn to identify and manage your stress. See our [Brain **BOOST**: Build Your Resilience to Stress](#).
- **Nutrition.** Nourish for mood, energy, and thought. *Action:* Eat with the brain in mind — light, often, and mindfully. See [Brain **BOOST**: Eat Real for Brain Health](#).
- **Physical activity.** Get up and get your heart pumping. *Action:* MOVE and keep moving. For tips, see our [Brain **BOOST**: How Much Exercise is Enough?](#)
- **Sleep.** Restore. *Action:* Know your sleep chronotype and work to improve sleep quality and quantity. Check out [Brain **BOOST**: How Much Sleep Do You Need?](#)
- **Social connection.** Connect. *Action:* Stay connected to your people. See [Brain **BOOST**: Helping Others](#).
- **Emotional wellbeing.** Flourish. *Action:* Experience positive emotions. Check out [Brain **BOOST**: Healthy Habits Equal a Happy Life](#).
- **Home, nature, and environment.** Protect yourself. *Action:* Keep the environment around your brain and body safe. See the [Brain **BOOST**: A Healthy Environment Makes a Difference](#).
- **Meaning and purpose.** Align. *Action:* Find meaning and purpose in life. Check out the [Brain **BOOST**: Spirituality and Purpose Make a Difference](#).
- **Cognitive stimulation and creativity.** ENGAGE. *Action:* Stay cognitively engaged. For tips see [Brain **BOOST**: Reducing Brain Drain](#).
- **General health.** Energize. *Action:* Optimize your general health. Check out these two Brain **BOOSTs**: Keys to [Protecting Men's Health](#) and [Annual Checkups for Brain and Body Health](#).
- **Positive impacts.** Contribute. *Action:* Boost your brainpower by fueling connection and engagement through service and collaboration. See the [Brain **BOOST**: Building a Brain Healthy Community](#) and learn more about our [Brain Health Scholars](#).
- **Future protective factors.** Participate in future brain health discovery. The Brain Health Initiative engages the community and partners with world-renowned scientists, innovators, clinicians, entrepreneurs, and related stakeholders to change the paradigm of protecting brain health, promoting optimal brain performance, and preventing and fighting brain illness across the lifespan.

The Brain Health Initiative is focused on engagement, research, and innovations to increase brain health outcomes through:

- Promotion
- Prevention
- Early Identification

- Evidence-Based Intervention
- Performance Optimization

About the Brain Health Initiative (www.brainhealthinitiative.org)

The Brain Health Initiative (BHI) is non-profit 501(c)(3). The BHI uses a cutting-edge approach to protecting brain health, promoting brain performance, and preventing and fighting brain illness across the lifespan. The BHI is building brain healthy communities, cultures that foster brain health protective factors and address risk factors, thereby improving brain health and optimizing brain performance outcomes for the Florida Suncoast region and beyond. Join the ***Be Brain Healthy*** movement, ***because brain health matters, and lifestyle makes a difference.*** To view all Brain Health Boosts [click here](#).