

feel great

Quick relief from back pain

Are pain pills not helping your aching back? Harvard Medical School reports that drugs like acetaminophen relieve back pain no better than a placebo. What is science-proven to work? These simple natural tips!

Walk around the block

The simplest prescription of back pain: taking a 20- to 40-minute walk a few times a week. "Back pain is usually caused by muscles being tight and shortened," explains Jacob Teitelbaum, M.D., author of Pain-Free 1-2-3. "Walking not only stretches muscles, it strengthens the back and abdominal muscles that support the spine, so they



are less likely to seize up on you." In fact, research published in the journal Clinical Rehabilitation found walking to be as effective at eliminating back pain as some forms of in-office physical therapy.

Tense and release

Back pain kicks off a vicious circle, triggering the body to tense up, which in turn ratchets up the pain even more. But new Italian research finds that 10 minutes of a simple relaxation technique breaks the cycle, causing pain scores to plummet. "Progressive muscle relaxation is an easy process in which you tense a group of muscles as you breathe in, and then you relax those muscles as you breathe out," explains Michelle Ebbin, author of The Touch Remedy: Hands-On Solutions to De-Stress Your Life. "This eases physical tension responsible for chronic back pain." Enter the search terms "progressive muscular relaxation" on YouTube for free video guides.



/ Rub on this!

British research reveals that folks who rubbed a comfrey cream on their backs decreased the intensity of their pain by 95% in five days. "A variety called traumaplant is so powerful that research has shown it to be even more effective than pain medications," says Dr. Teitelbaum, who advises choosing one "free of pyrrolizidine alkaloids," which are toxic to the liver. One to try: Terry Naturally Traumaplant. —K.E. Kluznik

We may joke about "senior moments," but the truth is, we can't help worrying when we forget why we opened the fridge. Indeed, a recent survey reveals that staying sharp as we age is our number-one priority! Thankfully, experts say you can stop—and even reverse—brain aging, cutting your risk of dementia by 88%. And it's easy! Just...



Bring up the laundry

We're already getting, on average, 17 minutes of exercise daily; adding just another eight minutes of motion could cut your risk of dementia by 88%, plus help your brain function as if it's 11 years younger, report researchers at Sweden's University of Gothenburg. That's because aerobic activity, even sweeping the porch or carrying up the laundry, keeps your heart strong and arteries relaxed, and that makes it easy for oxygen-rich blood to reach your hard-working brain!

Fight aging with your smile

The bacteria that cause gum disease can speed brain aging if they sneak into your bloodstream. No wonder experts say brushing and flossing daily can cut your risk of memory lapses by 41%.

Eat a sweet pear

Up to 80% of us could prevent dementia by replacing grains and simple sugars with fruit, vegetables and legumes, report Yale University scientists. David Perlmutter, M.D., author of Grain Brain, explains this diet shift improves insulin sensitivity, which means that your brain cells end up using sugars much more efficiently and with less excess swelling and injury.

Set a new goal

Having a long-term goal you feel good about, like trying a new recipe every week, can cut your risk of dementia by 58%. Canadian researchers say regularly tackling meaningful projects heightens your production of a brain-nourishing hormone called nerve growth factor.

Try ginkgo

Five studies suggest taking up to 240 mg. of this herb daily can cut your risk of dementia by 42%, plus boost memory by 52% in one week. Explains neurologist Marco Canevelli, M.D., ginkgo increases blood flow to the brain. Try: Life Extension Ginkgo Biloba Certified Extract™ (LEF.com/ww). Note: Check with a doctor before supplementing. —Brenda Kearns