



## WellNYS Everyday

WellNYS Everyday is a wellness initiative dedicated to educating, engaging, and empowering New York State employees to choose to eat foods that are healthy for them and to be physically active. This initiative encourages employees to:

- Sign-up to receive the WellNYS Daily To-Do by email every day
- Run or walk your First or Next 5K
- Find out where to be physically active in New York State
- Celebrate your wellness success with “I Did It!”
- Engage in healthy behaviors while in your workplace
- Find a NYS Walking workplaces map
- Learn about Physical Activities in your region.

For more information go to:  
[oer.ny.gov/wellnys-everyday](http://oer.ny.gov/wellnys-everyday)

WellNYS Everyday is sponsored by NYS Work-Life Services.

WellNYS Daily To-Do

# September 2023

Train your brain

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
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3	4	5	6	7	8	9
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### MONTHLY WELLNYS DAILY TO-DO'S

**October**

Get to know your community.

**November**

Give a compliment to someone today.

**December**

Start a new habit using the two-minute rule.

- 1. The September WellNYS Daily To-Do is "Train Your Brain." Join us on Wednesday, September 13<sup>th</sup> at 12:00 noon for the wellness webinar, "Mind Your Health: Ways to Boost Your Brain." To register go to: <https://meetny.webex.com/weblink/register/r3df08c5f7b8a5cde1de41727ec99cb17>.
- 2. Did you know the brain weighs three pounds? For more information, check out the article, *Know Your Brain*, go to: <https://www.ninds.nih.gov/health-information/public-education/brain-basics/brain-basics-know-your-brain>.
- 3. Instead of scrolling through your phone on social media, change it up, and find an app that can train your brain. Download an app and play a trivia or word game.
- 4. Sudoku is a number-placement puzzle and an excellent game to train your brain. This game is played by using all the numbers one through nine to form a line, a box, and a grid. Look online to learn how to play.
- 5. Try these three tips to remember a name of someone you just met: 1. After the person says their name, repeat it. 2. Make an association and a connection with their name to something important to you. 3. Say their name again. If you can't remember their name, it's okay to ask.
- 6. Use your own memories to replay the significant experiences in your life. Write down a specific year and next to it, add any major life events. For example: What happened in your life in 2017?
- 7. To learn how exercise affects the brain, go to: <https://lifesciences.byu.edu/how-exercise-affects-your-brain>.
- 8. Learning a new language is an excellent way to train your brain. There are plenty of free programs on the Internet. In the search engine, type "best free language learning websites or apps."
- 9. Train your brain this weekend by playing a game of Scrabble. Scrabble is board game played with others. The objective is to create words using your letters and placing them on a board. For every word you put on the board, you will receive points. The person with the highest number of points, wins!
- 10. The act of listening to a story can light up your brain. According to OEDB.org, when we are told a story, not only are language processing parts of our brain activated, but experiential parts of our brains also come alive. <https://www.oedb.org/librarian/your-brain-on-books-10-things-that-happen-to-our-minds-when-we-read/>.
- 11. Learning one new word per day can build your vocabulary and train your brain. Go to: <https://www.merriam-webster.com/word-of-the-day/calendar> every day. Once you learn a specific new word, use it in a sentence.
- 12. If you had to choose a jigsaw puzzle, how many pieces would you choose? Studies have shown that doing jigsaw puzzles can improve cognition, visual-spatial reasoning, improved concentration, short-term memory, and problem solving. <https://blogs.bcm.edu/2020/10/29/a-perfect-match-the-health-benefits-of-jigsaw-puzzles/>.
- 13. Join us today at 12:00 noon for the wellness webinar, *Mind Your Health: Ways to Boost Your Brain*. A maximum of 1,000 participants can attend. If you are unable to join the webinar, it will be recorded and added to the WellNYS Everyday website. <https://meetny.webex.com/weblink/register/r3df08c5f7b8a5cde1de41727ec99cb17>.
- 14. Learning to dance can increase the brain's processing speed and memory. Try a Zumba or Salsa class or ask your partner to go to a ballroom dancing class .
- 15. Whenever you are learning a new skill, set aside time and practice this skill every day. You will gain confidence and may master the skill sooner the more you practice.
- 16. Flow is the unique mental state of effortless engagement. To learn more how to enter the flow state, go to: [https://www.ted.com/talks/ted\\_ed\\_how\\_to\\_enter\\_flow\\_state?language=en](https://www.ted.com/talks/ted_ed_how_to_enter_flow_state?language=en).
- 17. Taking up a regular practice of tai chi can help reduce stress, enhance sleep quality, and improve memory. A 2013 study found that long-term tai chi practice could induce structural changes in the brain, resulting in an increase in brain volume. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3621760/>.
- 18. Try a free crossword puzzle every day at: <https://www.dictionary.com/>.
- 19. Feeling stressed? Most likely your mind needs a rest so try a couple minutes of meditation. Simply close your eyes, take a few deep breaths, and allow your body and mind to rest. If you struggle to meditate, listen to a guided meditation. Search the web for guided meditations as there are many.
- 20. Make a list and memorize it. This could be a grocery list or a to-do list. Make the list challenging. Think of it as a work-out for your brain.
- 21. Simple ways to challenge the mind include changing up your routines or habits. Drive home a different way, eat a meal with a different hand, or put your left sock on first if you always put your right sock on first. Mixing up your routines will challenge your mind.
- 22. Instead of relying on your phone contact list, challenge yourself to memorize important phone numbers of your family and friends. Do you remember your childhood phone number?
- 23. Cooking is good for your brain. It involves making a meal plan with details, making a list to grocery shop, and multi-tasking and organization. Check out the following article: <https://health.clevelandclinic.org/cooking-for-cognition-why-making-a-meal-is-good-for-your-brain/>.
- 24. Train your brain by reading every day. Instead of reading the Internet, turn paper pages and read books, magazines, and newspapers. Reading challenges your mind.
- 25. Do you write in a journal? If you want to remember something specific that occurred during your day, write it down in your journal before you go to bed. This is an easy way to recall information.
- 26. Sleep is essential to brain health. Some studies suggest that during sleep, your brain flushes out toxins that have accumulated during the day. It is also important for consolidating short-term memories into long-term memories. Sleep deprivation has also been linked to the development of neurodegenerative disease, so it is very important to not skip sleep. Source: <https://www.nih.gov/news-events/nih-research-matters/how-sleep-clears-brain>.
- 27. Are you ambidextrous? The definition means you can use either the right or left hand with equal ease when you perform such tasks as writing, cooking, or brushing your teeth. Practicing this teaches your brain to do something new.
- 28. Meditation and mindfulness may affect the functioning or structure of the brain. To learn more, go to: <https://www.nccih.nih.gov/health/meditation-and-mindfulness-what-you-need-to-know>.
- 29. You are what you eat. A balanced diet is essential for brain health. Vegetables, fruits, and Omega-3's is essential for brain function. Does your diet include the recommended amounts of these important nutrients?
- 30. What was your favorite tip to train your mind this month?

Number of days completed