

AIML Brain-Healthy Activity Planner

avlml.org

A Gentle Stretch Wellness + add-on activities

Simple planning goal: aim for about 750 MET points per week.

These classes already provide many ingredients of a brain-healthy movement program: balance, strength, mobility, posture, breathing, coordination, and social engagement. Many people also need extra moderate aerobic activity – such as walking, cycling, swimming, or water exercise – to reach a weekly activity dose associated with better cognitive aging.



What are MET points?

MET points = intensity × minutes. For this handout, values are simplified and rounded to the nearest 25. You do not need to do the math – just add the points.

A Gentle Stretch Wellness classes		
Class or activity	Typical duration	MET points
Tai Chi / Qigong	45 min	150
YOQI / Chair Yoga + Qigong	45 min	125
Strength & Balance	45 min	150
Qigong	30 min	100
Therapeutic Yoga / Yoga for Neuroscience / Lake Rugby Yoga	60 min	150
Weight Bearing Aerobics	30 min	150
Strong Bones	30 min	100
YOQI / Chair Yoga + Qigong	60 min	175

Helpful add-on activities (30-minute block)		
Add-on activity	Duration	MET points
Moderate walking	30 min	125
Brisk walking	30 min	150
Water walking	30 min	150
Water aerobics	30 min	175
Leisure cycling	30 min	125
Stationary cycling	30 min	150
Easy swimming / easy laps	30 min	175
Low-impact dance / aerobics	30 min	150
Resistance bands or weights	30 min	100



Why aim for 750 MET points?

A weekly pattern of regular physical activity – especially when it combines aerobic, strength, balance, and coordination work – is associated with better cognitive function and may support cognitive resilience in older adults. The classes here provide an excellent multimodal base; the most common missing ingredient is enough weekly moderate aerobic activity.

References: Yang Y, Pan N, Liu Y, Xu W, et al. Optimal type and dose of exercise to improve cognitive function in healthy and pre-sarcopenic older adults: a Bayesian network meta-analysis of randomized controlled trials. *European Review of Aging and Physical Activity*. 2026;23:9. Ngandu T, Lehtisalo J, Solomon A, et al. A 2 year multidomain intervention of diet, exercise, cognitive training, and vascular risk monitoring versus control to prevent cognitive decline in at-risk elderly people (FINGER): a randomised controlled trial. *Lancet*. 2015;385:2255–2263.

Use the back page to build your own 750-point week.

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Build Your 750-Point Week (avml.org)



- 1 Pick the classes and activities you plan to do.
- 2 Write the MET points from the front page into the boxes.
- 3 Add your weekly total. Aim for about 750 points.

	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
Activity 1	Activity: Points:	Activity: Points:	Activity: Points:	Activity: Points:	Activity: Points:	Activity: Points:	Activity: Points:
Activity 2	Activity: Points:	Activity: Points:	Activity: Points:	Activity: Points:	Activity: Points:	Activity: Points:	Activity: Points:
Activity 3	Activity: Points:	Activity: Points:	Activity: Points:	Activity: Points:	Activity: Points:	Activity: Points:	Activity: Points:
Daily total							

Weekly total: _____ MET points

Goal: 750 MET points



Quick examples

- 5 brisk walks = about 750 points
- 3 classes + 2 brisk walks often gets close
- Gentle classes build balance, mobility, and coordination
- Walking, water exercise, or cycling often add the missing aerobic points



What cognitive benefit are we aiming for?

Regular physical activity – especially when it combines aerobic, strength, balance, and coordination work – is associated with better cognitive function and may support cognitive resilience in older adults. The goal is not perfection. A consistent weekly routine is more important than any single class or activity.

References: Yang Y, Pan N, Liu Y, Xu W, et al. *European Review of Aging and Physical Activity*. 2026;23:9. Ngandu T, Lehtisalo J, Solomon A, et al. *Lancet*. 2015;385:2255–2263.

AIML Brain-Healthy Nutrition Handout

MIND-style eating + a daily multivitamin

Practical serving guide

Nuts: 1 serving = 1 small handful (about 1 oz)

Vegetables: 1 serving = 1 cup raw or 1/2 cup cooked

Berries: 1 serving = 1/2 cup

Whole grains: 1 serving = 1 slice bread or 1/2 cup cooked oats, rice, or cereal

Fish / shellfish / poultry / red meat: 1 meal = 3–4 oz cooked

Beans / legumes: 1 meal = 1/2 cup

Tofu: 1 meal = 3–4 oz

Cheese: 1 serving = 1 oz

Wine: 1 glass = about 5 oz

Food group	Unhealthy weekly diet (score 0)	Healthy weekly diet (score 1)
1. Nuts ★	Rarely or <1 serving/week	5+ servings/week
2. Fried foods ★	4+ times/week	<1 time/week
3. Fish & shellfish ★	Rarely or <1 meal/week	1+ meal/week
4. Tea ★	<2 cups/day	4+ cups/day
5. Green leafy vegetables	2 or fewer servings/week	6+ servings/week
6. Berries	<1 serving/week	2+ servings/week
7. Beans, legumes, or tofu	<1 meal/week	3+ meals/week
8. Whole grains	<1 serving/day	3+ servings/day
9. Other vegetables	<5 servings/week	1+ serving/day
10. Poultry (not fried)	<1 meal/week	2+ meals/week
11. Fish (not fried)	Rarely	1+ meal/week
12. Olive oil	Not primary oil	Primary oil used
13. Butter / margarine	>2 Tbsp/day	<1 Tbsp/day
14. Cheese	7+ servings/week	<1 serving/week
15. Red meat & processed meat	7+ meals/week	<4 meals/week
16. Pastries & sweets	7+ servings/week	<5 servings/week
17. Wine †	>1 glass/day or never	1 glass/day

Evidence summary

- People at the highest adherence levels to MIND-style eating have shown better cognitive function, but not lower risk of cognitive decline.
- Cognitive function findings include benefits for episodic, verbal, and semantic memory, but not working memory.

Daily multivitamin note

- In the COSMOS randomized trial, a daily multivitamin-mineral showed a modest benefit on global cognition and episodic memory in older adults.
- The effect size was estimated as roughly equivalent to about **2 years** less cognitive aging.

How to use this handout

- Aim for the high-adherence column more often than the low-adherence column.
- Think in patterns, not single superfoods.
- Use this as a practical guide, not a prescription.

AIML Brain-Healthy Nutrition Handout

Cognitive engagement + local resources in Western North Carolina

Clinical note – talk with your doctor

Blood pressure control has the clearest randomized evidence for reducing mild cognitive impairment (MCI) risk – see your doctor about screening and management of hypertension. Diabetes, smoking, cholesterol, obesity, and sleep apnea are general aging risks that also affect brain health.

Reference: *Williamson JD et al. JAMA. 2019;321(6):553–561.*

Cognitive engagement: what counts?

Cognitive engagement means regularly doing activities that require learning, attention, memory, language, planning, problem-solving, or social exchange. The goal is not passive entertainment. The goal is repeated, meaningful mental effort.

Activity type	What it trains
Taking a class	New learning, memory, attention
Joining a discussion group	Language, reasoning, recall
Volunteering	Planning, social cognition, purpose
Book clubs / writing groups	Reading, verbal memory, interpretation
Music, art, crafts, language study	Sequencing, practice, skill learning
Technology learning	Problem-solving, adaptation, confidence

Local ways to stay cognitively active

Resource	What to look for
OLLI at UNC Asheville	Lifelong learning classes, College for Seniors, shared interest groups, lectures, volunteering, and community learning.
Henderson County Public Library	Adult programs, book clubs, technology classes, writing groups, author events, and community-sponsored events.
Alzheimer's Association – Western Carolina Chapter	Education programs, caregiver support, dementia resources, and local support groups.
MemoryCare / WNC caregiver resources	Support groups and caregiver education for families dealing with memory disorders.
AIML / avlml.org events	Community education events on technology, aging, health data, and practical AI/ML literacy.

References: *Williamson JD et al. JAMA. 2019;321(6):553–561.*

Resources: OLLI UNC Asheville; Henderson County Public Library; Alzheimer's Association Western Carolina Chapter; MemoryCare Asheville.