

## BACKGROUND: BRAIN HEALTH

### Understanding public perceptions and information sources in Canada

In 2021 the Global Council on Brain Health released the report [How to Sustain Brain Healthy Behaviours](#) which outlined actions that individuals can take to achieve better brain health as they age. These actions are called the Six Pillars of Brain Health, as shown below. While dementia is not the only form of cognitive decline, these pillars can arguably contribute to the Government of Canada's goals outlined in the [Dementia Strategy](#) – preventing dementia, advancing therapies, and finding a cure, and improving the quality of life for individuals with dementia.

The Global Council on Brain Health Report highlights tangible ways individuals can contribute to their brain health, yet in Canada the current baseline understanding of brain health is relatively unknown. Also, the perceptions of caregivers and healthcare professionals managing people with cognitive decline it is not well understood.

Understanding and then addressing any misconceptions can help to achieve the goals outlined in the Canadian Dementia Strategy including identifying barriers and the opportunities to improve awareness . This survey seeks to identify potential misconceptions around brain health and cognitive decline and learn where and how information is gathered to help inform tailored health communication. Click [here](#) to access the Brain Health Survey.

### Six Pillars of Brain Health



#### Be Social

Keep in touch with friends & family, don't let yourself get isolated.



#### Engage Your Brain

Find ways to stimulate your thinking, explore new interests and hobbies.



#### Manage Stress

Practice relaxation, adopt a stable daily schedule.



#### Ongoing Exercise

Move throughout the day, target 2½ hours a week of moderate physical activity.



#### Restorative Sleep

Get 7–8 hours of restful sleep every day.



#### Eat Right

Choose a nutritious, heart-healthy diet of fish, veggies, and fruits.

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The [International Federation on Ageing](#) (IFA) is an international, non-governmental organization (NGO) with a unique membership base comprising government, NGOs, academics, industry, and individuals in over 80 countries. Nearly 50 years old, the IFA has become known as a leading and innovative organization that works across disciplines and sectors toward common goals that improve the lives of older people. Through the IFA's formal relations with the World Health Organization (WHO) and general consultative status at the United Nations and its agencies, the IFA is in the position to advocate directly with member states and contribute to and inform intergovernmental dialogue.