

# Memory Tips & Tricks

We can all use a helpful tip or two! Here are a few strategies that can be used to improve cognitive health and mental well-being for people living with Mild Cognitive Impairment (MCI) or dementia.



## GET ORGANIZED

- Use a day planner or calendar to organize your appointments.
- Be consistent. For example, try to do the same things at the same time each day. Keep your schedule.
- Always keep things in the same place. For example, always leave your keys by the front door.
- Consider purchasing duplicates of items you use often, such as toothbrushes, nail clippers, reading glasses and watches.
- Use a pill organizer to help you keep track of your medications. Or ask your pharmacy to put your pills in a “blister pack”.
- Keep a list of important phone numbers next to the phone. Put these numbers in your mobile phone.
- Flag all emails that need a follow-up and go through your flagged emails once a week to make sure you have followed up on them.

## WRITE IT DOWN

- Write down all your appointments on one calendar or day planner and check it often.
- Use one notebook to write down any important information that you have received or may need.
- Make lists and cross off each task after you finish it.
- Consider taking detailed notes of your conversations with other people.

## TIPS FOR FAMILY, FRIENDS & CARE PARTNERS

- Talk slowly to give the person time to process what you say.
- Speak in short phrases. Pause between sentences.
- Repeat information.
- Talk about one thing at a time. Let them when you want to change the subject.
- Allow opportunities for the person to practice new memory strategies as it applies to their routine.
- Keep a quiet place for the person to work, read, or watch TV.
- Note that it can take time and effort to learn to use a new memory strategy.

## USE SIGNS

- Post reminder signs. For example: “bring your keys”, “turn off the stove”, “unplug the iron”, or “lock doors”.
- Use labels. For example: label cupboards and drawers with words or pictures of what is inside.
- Hang a calendar where you keep your medications, use the calendar to mark down the time and day you took your medication.
- Post-it notes are a great way to write down reminders as needed or as you think of them
- Dry erase whiteboards are another great tool to help you remember things, be sure to update the information on the whiteboard as you complete each task.
- Consider using visual cues as reminders. Hanging a backpack on your door handle can serve as a reminder to take it with you when you leave.

## USE ALARMS & TIMERS

- Use a timer when you are using the stove or oven.
- Consider using appliances that turn off by themselves, such as a microwave, auto-off electric kettle, or iron.
- Use alarms to remind you to do things, such as taking your pills or going to an appointment. You may be able to use the alarm feature in your mobile phone for this.