



Your Brain Matters is a program that guides you on how to look after your brain health. It is based on scientific evidence that a number of health and lifestyle factors are associated with brain function and the risk of developing dementia.

Being brain healthy is relevant at any age, whether you are young, old or in between. As a carer, with many responsibilities, brain and body health is even more important.

Scientific research suggests that living a brain healthy life, particularly during mid-life, may reduce a person's risk of developing dementia. However, there are no guarantees as dementia cannot yet be prevented or cured.

There are 5 simple steps involved in the program. All are important for maintaining brain health and are associated with reduced risk of dementia.

# IT ONLY TAKES 5 SIMPLE STEPS TO MAXIMISE YOUR BRAIN HEALTH

## KEEP YOUR BRAIN HEALTHY AND REDUCE YOUR RISK OF DEMENTIA

**STEP ONE** - Look after your heart

**STEP TWO** - Be physically active

**STEP THREE** - Mentally challenge your brain

**STEP FOUR** - Follow a healthy diet

**STEP FIVE** - Enjoy social activity.

- Exercise regularly, at least 30 minutes of physical activity on most days
- Challenge your brain with activities that involve new learning, problem solving or complex thinking, on most days
- Eat fruit and vegetables every day
- Eat fish or seafood each week
- Limit the amount of fat eaten (such as take away, deep fried foods, pies, pastries and cakes) to once or twice per week
- Drink no more than two standard drinks per day
- Get involved in social activities with friends, family and/or colleagues on most days
- have your blood pressure, cholesterol, blood sugar (glucose) and weight checked every 12 months
- Don't smoke.

### WHAT ELSE CAN YOU DO TO AVOID DEMENTIA?

## START TODAY BY MENTALLY CHALLENGING YOUR BRAIN

Keeping our brains active is important to keep it functioning well. Scientists have found that challenging the brain with new activities helps to build new brain cells and strengthen connections between them.

*continued overleaf* ►



# The Byron carer

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[www.byronrespite.com.au](http://www.byronrespite.com.au)

Byron Shire Respite Service is located at the Brunswick Valley Community Centre, South Beach Rd, Brunswick Heads.

**Our incorporated non-government community based organisation is managed by a local committee and covers the shires of Byron, Ballina and Lismore.**

Respite care is delivered through our Changed Behaviour, Day Respite and Social Support projects, with a person centred enablement approach across the respite continuum.

**Telephone Janine Smith on: 02) 6685 1619 or Colin Munro: 02) 6685 1921**

**Website: [www.byronrespite.com.au](http://www.byronrespite.com.au)  
Email: [service@byronrespite.com.au](mailto:service@byronrespite.com.au)**



Byron Shire Respite Service acknowledge and pay respect to the Arakwal people of the Bundjalung nation, the traditional owners of the land on which we live and care – and pay respect to the Elders past, present and emerging.

◀ Continued from last page

This helps to give the brain more 'reserve' or 'back up' so that it can cope better and keep working properly if any brain cells are damaged or die.

Mental exercise may also protect against accumulation of damaging proteins in the brains of people with Alzheimer's disease.

As we grow older we tend to prefer doing the things we've always done, tasks that we are familiar with - and that's understandable - but the brain benefits by having to tackle something it doesn't know.

It could be learning a new language, taking up a new sport, doing a

course in something you're always wanted to do - anything really, as long as it's learning something new. Challenge yourself often and keep learning new things throughout life. Higher levels of mental activity throughout life are consistently associated with better brain function and reduced risk of cognitive decline and dementia.

Importantly for older or retired people, increased complex mental activity in later life is associated with a lower dementia risk, which is good news for those who are able to work beyond retirement age.

For more information, visit the **My Brain Matters website** at: <https://yourbrainmatters.org.au>

### Try something new this month

If you are not familiar with webinars held over the computer - why not try something new in a couple of weeks by registering for one of Dementia Australia's free online webinars? Webinars occur 'live' and in real-time over the computer and usually have audio and visual components.

The visual component of a webinar is shared through your internet browser or a web conferencing tool. The audio portion of a webinar is usually broadcast through the audience's computers through speakers or headphones.

## Free Online Webinars from Dementia Australia

### DRIVING AND DEMENTIA

Date: Wednesday, 26 June 2019  
2:00pm to 2:45pm

#### Free of charge

The Driving and Dementia webinar is an initiative of Dementia Australia. This online education and support session provides information about the effects of dementia on driving. It is specifically designed for people living with dementia and their carers. Getting around options for non drivers are also discussed.

This online education and support session aims to provide information about dementia and support options to people living with early stage dementia, and their care partners.

Only accessible online / Runs for 45 mins  
Reading materials are provided upon registration

Dementia Australia NSW invites you to register for this Driving and Dementia webinar if you: have received a diagnosis of dementia and drive. OR are caring for someone diagnosed with dementia who drives.

Registration is essential.

or further information call (02) 8875 4663  
or email:

[NSW.Referralearlyintervention@dementia.org.au](mailto:NSW.Referralearlyintervention@dementia.org.au)

### RECENTLY DIAGNOSED WITH DEMENTIA

Date: Tuesday, 30 July 2019  
11:00am to 12:00pm

#### Free of charge

The Recently Diagnosed with Dementia information sessions are an initiative of Dementia Australia

This online education and support session aims to provide information about dementia and support options to people living with early stage dementia, and their care partners.

Only accessible online / Runs for 45—60 mins  
Reading materials are provided upon registration  
Is NOT intended for Health Care workers

Dementia Australia NSW invites you to register for this Recently Diagnosed with Dementia Information Session webinar if you:

Have recently received a diagnosis of dementia; OR  
Are caring for someone recently diagnosed with early stage dementia.

Pre-registration is essential.

For further information call (02) 8875 4663  
or email:

[NSW.Referralearlyintervention@dementia.org.au](mailto:NSW.Referralearlyintervention@dementia.org.au)



### CARER LIFE COURSE

As a carer of a parent, spouse, partner, child, sibling or friend - it is likely that your relationship with the person needing care will change as their needs change. Other family members are also affected and your lives will never be the same again.

Most carers feel their own needs get lost in the caring role. Many carers feel they need support but don't know where to turn. You need to have your own emotional and practical needs recognised and supported as your carer role changes.

A NSW Carers Australia initiative, the Carer Life Course is a free interactive online information and support program for carers. The Carer Life Course identifies the phases of caring that carers often go through, and provides information, support and resources that will assist carers at each phase.

The Carer Life Course contains an interactive program, The 6 carer phases, which details what you might experience at each phase of your caring journey and the types of information and support you may need at this time.

The interactive program also explores how each phase impacts on your needs depending on your relationship to the person needing care.

To find out more, visit:

<http://carerlifecourse.org.au/>

and start learning ways to make life easier today.

Byron Shire Respite Service Inc. is supported by the Australian Government Department of Health. Visit [www.health.gov.au](http://www.health.gov.au) for more information.

Although funding for the Commonwealth Home Support Programme has been provided by the Australian Government, the material contained herein does not necessarily represent the views or policies of the Australian Government.

**Our Vision Statement:**  
*With a focus on caring, wellness and reablement, provide person centred support to people with diverse needs to enhance their quality of life and maintain a familiar lifestyle in the community and in their own homes.*

# Need support?

● **My Aged Care** 1800 200 422 for information about the Australian Government's aged care system and services. [www.myagedcare.gov.au](http://www.myagedcare.gov.au)

**If you require emergency respite, please call: 1800 052 222**  
(24hrs)

- **Call Colin or Janine at Byron Shire Respite Service Inc. to discuss your role as a carer.** ph: (02) 6685 1921
- **National Dementia Helpline** ph: 1800 100 500
- **Carers Counselling Service** ph: (02) 6628 6416
- **Carers NSW** ph: 1800 242 636
- **Sandra Kimball Counselling** ph: 0458 175 962
- **Far North Coast Commonwealth Respite & Carelink Centre** ph: 1800 052 222
- **National Continence Helpline** ph: 1800 330 066
- **NSW Elder Abuse Helpline** ph: 1800 628 221

### Aids:

- **Byron Ballina Home Maintenance and Modification Service 1/65 Centennial Circuit, Byron Bay** ph: (02) 6685 7312
- **Bright Sky Cards for Continence Aids Payment Scheme (CAPS)** ph: 1300 886 601

### Need Transport?

- **Tweed Byron Ballina Community Transport** ph: 1300 875 895

Transport to medical appointments, weekly & fortnightly shopping outings & monthly social outings. The service is funded to support older people living at home independently or have a permanent disability or Indigenous Australians aged over 50 years. Phone Kathryn in the Byron office on: 1300 875 895 for transport to medical appointments or Amanda for any shopping bus or social bus enquiries.

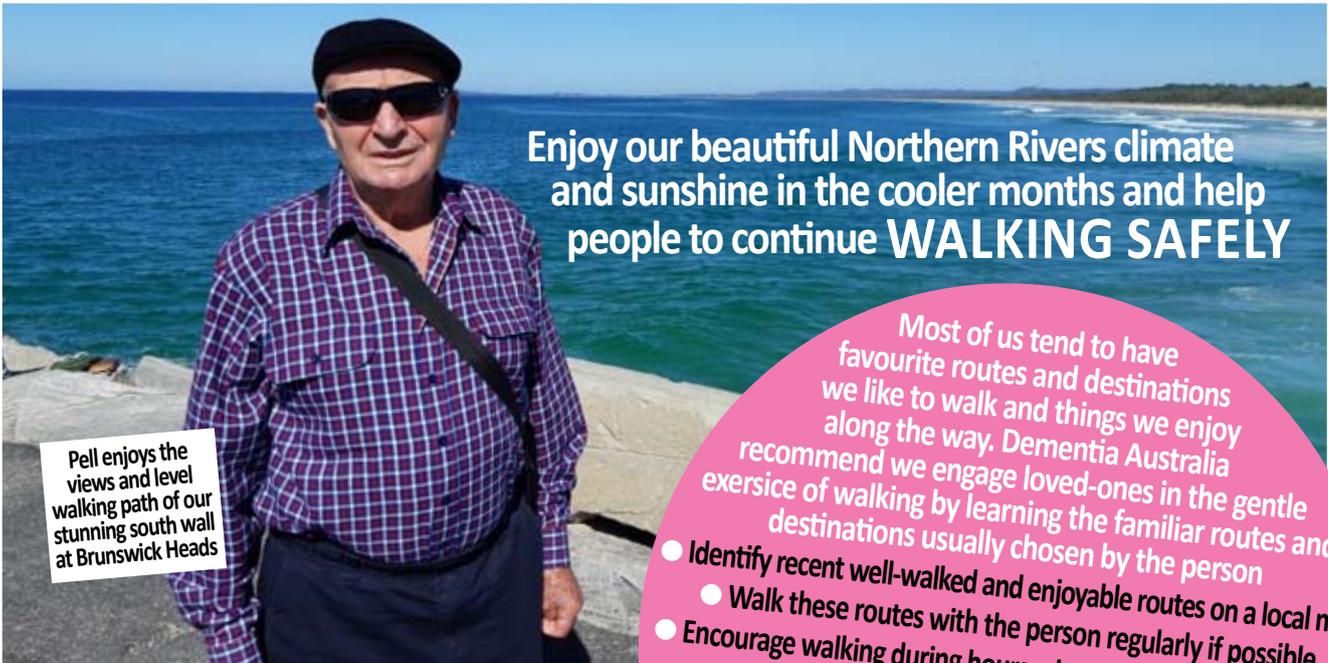
Travel for medical appointments free with travel voucher or for Veteran and Widow Gold Card holders:

- **Byron Shire Limousines** ph: (02) 6685 5008
- **Brunswick Limousines** phone David on: 0412 855 747.

### Byron Shire Respite Service Inc. Activity Timetable

monday	tuesday	wednesday	thursday	friday
10am – 2:30pm Changed Behaviours with Dementia	10am – 3pm Dementia Specific	10am – 3pm Changed Behaviours with Dementia	10am – 3pm Older people	10am – 3pm Dementia Specific

Lunch, morning and afternoon teas are provided and the cost for the day including transport is \$20.



Enjoy our beautiful Northern Rivers climate and sunshine in the cooler months and help people to continue **WALKING SAFELY**

Pell enjoys the views and level walking path of our stunning south wall at Brunswick Heads

- Most of us tend to have favourite routes and destinations we like to walk and things we enjoy along the way. Dementia Australia recommend we engage loved-ones in the gentle exercise of walking by learning the familiar routes and destinations usually chosen by the person
- Identify recent well-walked and enjoyable routes on a local map
  - Walk these routes with the person regularly if possible
  - Encourage walking during hours when other people are about
  - Know how long it usually takes to walk a given route
  - Know the stamina of the person with dementia and the average length and time of the walks they take alone.
  - Suggest routes that are safer than others in terms of the complexity of the environment, e.g. off main roads, in residential areas or parks, on defined pathways, fewer road crossings, level ground, well lit after dark.

**Walking is something that most of us take for granted, as a means of getting from place to place or getting our daily exercise. However older people or people with memory problems may experience many changes in their abilities and may need help from others to do some things.**

According to Dementia Australia, walking is a source of exercise, pleasure and independence that needs to be supported for as long as possible. Strategies can be put in place to make walking safer for the person you care for.

### What is safe walking?

#### Physical competence

Safe physical walking means that a person walks independently, is steady on their feet and has no history of falling. Many people with dementia are physically capable of safe walking until very late in the course of their illness.

#### Awareness

One aspect of safe walking is being aware of where you are, where you are going and how to get home again. This is called orientation to place. The ability to do this is a complex

cognitive skill called wayfinding. Leaving home alone is not necessarily problematic for people with dementia unless the person cannot find their way back.

People with dementia and their family members are not always aware of changes that have occurred in wayfinding ability until a problem is encountered. In advanced dementia, some people get lost even within their own homes.

#### Recognising and understanding important cues in the environment

A part of safe walking involves continuing to recognise one's own home, roads and traffic, take notice of and obey signs and other cues to safely cross roads - and retaining a realistic sense of distance.

#### Resting

The ability to rest is another aspect of safe walking. Some people walk for very long periods of time during the day and/or night. They get tired,

hungry and thirsty but may not be able to stop walking. When tired, they are more likely to fall or bump into things and hurt themselves.

#### Risks for people with dementia

The greatest risk associated with independent walking as the person with dementia declines is that he or she will leave the safety of their home unaccompanied and get lost.

In cases such as these, the Safely Home program – which is a joint partnership between Dementia Australia and the Missing Persons Unit of the NSW Police Force is a great option. It provides a stainless steel bracelet with an engraving that links back to the police data base, designed to be worn at all times by the person with dementia.

Physical competence is also a factor, as is the landscape and terrain they are walking in, their familiarity with the locale and the weather conditions.

