

## MEMORY LOSS

Last month was Mental Health Month so I thought it appropriate to follow up with **Memory Loss**.

Fear Not!!! Memory loss and brain aging are a part of getting older. Even in the fifties our memories may start to slip.

**Normal signs** may include forgetting: 1) parts of an experience; 2) where you park your car; 3) events of the distant past; or 4) a person's name—which you may remember later.

**Signs of more serious memory conditions** may include forgetting: 1) how to drive a car or read a clock; 2) recent events; 3) ever knowing a particular person whom you should know; 4) loss of function; 5) decreased alertness; 6) confusion; 7) worsening of symptoms

You can work on **improving your memory** by 1) focusing your attention on a specific task; 2) reducing stress which can endanger brain areas and memory processing; 3) choosing to snooze—fatigue can affect memory and concentration at any age; 4) structuring your environment; use calendars and clocks, write down your daily activities, store easy to lose items in the same place and park your car in the same place; 5) trying memory tricks i.e. to remember a person's name, repeat it several times when introduced and maybe use the same pin # for all accounts possible.

Another concern affecting the brain is a **Cerebral Vascular Accident or Stroke**. Strokes may be hard to identify. They can occur at any age. I've seen a stroke in persons in their late twenties and in their forties. If a stroke is not recognized early it may lead to brain damage. Three simple questions may help identify a stroke. **S**-have the individual SMILE. **T**-have the individual talk; speak a simple sentence i.e. the sun is shining. **R**-have them raise both arms. **Another test** is to have them stick out their tongue and look for any deviation from center. If any or all of these symptoms are positive; call 911. There are treatments today that if the stroke is caused from a clot it can be dissolved if caught soon enough.

I need to identify my information sources for our monthly column. Almost all of the data can be obtained from the internet under monthly health topics. Nadine

*Tip of the month:* Garlic is the oldest known medicinal plant. It has been proven to lower Cholesterol and Blood Pressure. It aids in thinning your blood thereby preventing strokes and heart attacks. It also has antibacterial effects. So eat garlic!!!