

BY THE BOOK

Maintaining a daily reading habit has shown to be beneficial for cognitive and emotional wellbeing.

Reading

Reading is known to be a popular and enjoyable cognitive leisure activity that has shown to benefit both cognitive and emotional wellbeing through intellectual stimulation.(1-4) The activity can involve reading alone, being read to by another person, or reading out loud to another person or group. Reading, reading comprehension and listening are a multifaceted, cognitive processes that activate various parts of the brain, stimulating cognitive function.(5, 6)

In older adults living in the community setting, activities, like reading, that are aimed at improving and maintaining cognitive engagement may be beneficial for the cognitive brain health and prevent dementia.(7, 8) Maintaining a daily reading activity has been shown to be associated with a reduced risk of cognitive decline in older people, (8) and has been shown to extend longevity in men.(9) In addition, reading has been shown to provide a form of relaxation which promotes emotional wellbeing, reduces stress, reduces feelings of depression and increases empathy and social awareness.(4, 5, 9) Book reading, as opposed to magazine reading, has specifically been shown to have increased verbal and memory benefits.(6) Reading of books promotes deep reading encouraging more thought and involvement in the text as part of the cognitive process.(5) Interestingly, reading the newspaper has been shown to reduce the onset of dementia particularly in females.(10) An enjoyable passive leisure activity when alone, reading can also encourage social connectedness when reading to a group or in the company of another person, impacting positively on the emotional wellbeing of older people.(3)

GOLDSTER★ **Points and Evidence Levels for this Activity**

Domain	Impact Strength	Points	Information on Evidence	Evidence Type	Evidence Level
Physical	None	0	Reading is generally a sedentary activity.	None	None
Cognitive	Mild	1	In healthy older people, reading has been shown to have a mild beneficial impact on reducing cognitive decline, maintaining cognitive abilities and preventing dementia.(7, 8, 10)	Longitudinal studies, Prospective cohort study	Low
Emotional	Mild	1	In healthy older people, reading has been shown to have a mild beneficial impact on emotional wellbeing, reducing stress, reducing feelings of depression, increasing social awareness and connectedness.(3-5, 9)	Systematic Reviews, Panel Study, Cohort Study	Low

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References

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