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Memory Strategies

The following are a list of generalized memory strategies. Each person is an individual and therefore one strategy that might work well for one person may not for another. It is important to allow yourself enough time to try each strategy more than once. Keep track of what strategies worked for you and what did not work.

1. Use a calendar or day planner to write down appointments, important dates, birthdays, etc. Place the calendar in a visible location and get into the routine of checking it daily.
2. Keep a “to do” list in a visible location (e.g. kitchen counter). Write down things that you want to accomplish and when completed check or cross the item off. Some people find it useful to have a weekly “to do” list that can be separated into days.
3. Use reminder signs around the home, for example, “Turn off stove” placed over the stove top; “Take medications” in the bathroom”; or a list of important things to check before leaving the home, which could be placed on the back of the front door, “Turn off stove, lights turned off, back door locked, etc”.
4. Keep a list of emergency contact people and numbers in a familiar and visible place for you (e.g. on the fridge or by the phone).
5. Get into a routine that works for you, for example, when you first get up in the morning checking your calendar, followed by making your breakfast and taking your medications. Some people find it helpful to write down a daily routine.
6. Have set locations for essential items, such as your keys and medication. Remember, there should be “a place for everything and everything in its place”.
7. Make a list of questions/comments that you want to cover for any upcoming appointments with your family doctor/medical specialists
8. Exercise your mind. We continue to exercise our bodies, and it is important to continue to exercise our minds. The following are some examples: crosswords, word searches, puzzles, brain teasers, playing cards or board games, learning something new (e.g. card game, knitting, using computer, etc.), reading, watching the news and discussing it with family members or friends later on. Get into the routine of exercising your mind on a daily basis.