

Name _____

Nurturing Your Nervous System: Tips for a Healthy Brain and Spinal Cord

Short Answer Key

1. Staying hydrated is important because dehydration can affect brain performance. Water is essential for various biochemical processes in the brain, and proper hydration helps maintain cognitive function and overall nervous system health.
2. Managing stress can positively impact the brain and spinal cord by reducing the harmful effects of chronic stress. High levels of stress hormones can damage nerve cells and impair cognitive function. Stress management techniques, such as relaxation and mindfulness, can help protect the nervous system from these negative effects.
3. Two sources of omega-3 fatty acids are fatty fish (e.g., salmon, mackerel) and flaxseeds. Omega-3 fatty acids are beneficial for brain health because they help maintain the structure of brain cell membranes, support communication between nerve cells, and have anti-inflammatory properties that protect brain tissue.
4. The spinal cord acts as a communication pathway between the brain and the rest of the body. It carries sensory information (such as touch, pain, and temperature) from the body to the brain for processing. It also transmits motor commands from the brain to the muscles, enabling movement. Essentially, it serves as a conduit for messages traveling to and from the brain, allowing us to perceive sensations and perform voluntary actions.
5. One example of a mentally challenging activity is solving crossword puzzles. These puzzles require language skills, memory, and problem-solving abilities. Engaging in activities like crossword puzzles can stimulate the brain, enhance cognitive function, and help maintain mental sharpness.

