

Brain Health Views and Experiences among Michigan Adults Age 50+

June 2026

www.healthyagingpoll.org



We will be asking you a series of questions about brain health: how well you think, learn, and remember. We are interested in your opinions about the habits, activities, or lifestyle factors that could support memory, learning, and overall mental sharpness as you age.

Q1. Overall, how would you rate your brain health at the present time?

1. Excellent
2. Very good
3. Good
4. Fair
5. Poor

Q2. For you personally, how important is maintaining brain health as you age?

1. Very important
2. Somewhat important
3. Not very important
4. Not at all important

Q3. How important is maintaining your brain health as you age compared to maintaining your physical health?

1. Brain health is more important
2. They are equally important
3. Physical health is more important

Q4. How much do you know about ways to maintain brain health?

1. A lot
2. Some
3. A little
4. Nothing

Q5. Overall, how important do you believe our lifestyle behaviors (e.g., diet, physical activity, sleep) are in maintaining brain health as we age?

1. Very important
2. Somewhat important
3. Not very important
4. Not at all important



Q6. In the past year, how often did you...

	1. Daily or on most days of the week	2. 1–3 times per week	3. Less than once a week	4. Rarely or never
A. Do mentally stimulating activities (e.g., puzzles or brain teasers, learning new skills, taking a class)				
B. Get physical exercise (e.g., walking, stretching, yoga, aerobic workouts)				
C. Eat a healthy, balanced diet (e.g., whole foods, vegetables, low sugar)				
D. Sleep for at least 7 hours per night				

If Q6A–Q6D = 1, 2, 3

Q7. How much did maintaining your brain health motivate you to...?

	A lot	Some	A little	Not at all
Do mentally stimulating activities (e.g., puzzles or brain teasers, learning new skills, taking a class)				
Get physical exercise (e.g., walking, stretching, yoga, aerobic workouts)				
Eat a healthy, balanced diet (e.g., whole foods, vegetables, low sugar)				
Sleep for at least 7 hours per night				

Q8. How important do you believe the following are in helping maintain brain health as one ages?

	Very important	Somewhat important	Not very important	Not at all important
Doing mentally stimulating activities (e.g., puzzles or brain teasers, learning new skills, taking a class)				
Getting physical exercise (e.g., walking, stretching, yoga, aerobic workouts)				
Eating a healthy, balanced diet (e.g., whole foods, vegetables, low sugar)				
Sleeping for at least 7 hours per night				



Q9. How important do you believe the following are in helping maintain brain health as one ages?

	Very important	Somewhat important	Not very important	Not at all important
Controlling blood pressure				
Maintaining a healthy weight				
Managing cholesterol				
Socializing with others				
Taking vitamins and supplements				
Avoiding falls				
Minimizing exposure to aluminum				

Q10. How important do you believe the following are in helping maintain brain health as one ages?

	Very important	Somewhat important	Not very important	Not at all important
Avoiding sugary beverages, like soda				
Managing stress				
Protecting against head injuries				
Treating depression				
Not smoking				
Limiting alcohol consumption				
Addressing hearing loss				

Q11. Overall, how important do you believe our lifestyle behaviors (e.g., diet, physical activity, sleep) are in reducing the risk of Alzheimer’s disease or other types of dementia?

1. Very important
2. Somewhat important
3. Not very important
4. Not at all important



Q12. Have you ever discussed any of the following with a healthcare provider?

	Yes	No	Unsure
Ways to maintain brain health			
Ways to reduce your risk of Alzheimer’s disease and other dementias			
Early warning signs of Alzheimer’s disease and other dementias			
Tests to screen for Alzheimer’s disease and other dementias			

If age ≥ 65

Q13. During cognitive screening (e.g., memory testing), a person is given a brief set of tasks to test their memory and thinking skills, such as remembering a short list of common words or drawing a complex figure.

Have you ever had a cognitive screening? If you have had more than one screening, please think about the most recent time you had a screening.

1. Yes, within the past year
2. Yes, more than a year ago
3. No

Q14. From what sources would you like to learn more about brain health?

Select all that apply.

1. My healthcare provider
2. Articles or other written materials
3. Apps on a smartphone or tablet
4. In-person workshops
5. My workplace / employee wellness program
6. Online webinars / videos
7. Podcasts
8. Other sources
9. None of the above - not interested in learning more



If Q14 1 = yes

Q15. If your healthcare provider were to offer education on maintaining brain health as you age, when or how would you want this information?

Select all that apply.

1. During an annual exam (even if I'm not having memory or thinking issues)
2. After a cognitive screening shows memory and thinking problems
3. After being diagnosed with dementia
4. Communication from my patient portal (e.g., questionnaire, pamphlet, etc.)
5. In a healthcare visit devoted specifically to discussing brain health
6. Through an information session offered by my health system or healthcare provider
7. Not interested

Data Source and Methods

This [Michigan Poll on Healthy Aging](#) report presents findings from a state-wide household survey conducted exclusively by NORC at the University of Chicago for the University of Michigan Institute for Healthcare Policy and Innovation (IHPI). This survey was administered online and by phone in January 2026 to a group of Michigan adults age 50–93 (n=1,293), with 386 from the AmeriSpeak probability-based panel and 907 from non-probability panels. The survey completion rate was 66% among probability-based panel members in Michigan that were invited to participate. The margin of error is ± 1 to 4 percentage points for questions asked of the full sample and higher among subgroups. Results are weighted to reflect the 50+ population in Michigan.

The Michigan Poll on Healthy Aging is supported by the [Michigan Health Endowment Fund](#) and affiliated with the [National Poll on Healthy Aging](#), also based at IHPI and supported by [Michigan Medicine](#).

Read past [Michigan Poll on Healthy Aging reports](#) and [national findings](#), explore previous [interactive data dashboards](#), and [learn about the poll methodology](#).

National Poll on Healthy Aging Team

Jeffrey Kullgren, MD, MS, MPH
Director

Erica Solway, PhD, MPH, MSW
Deputy Director

Scott Roberts, PhD
Associate Director

Matthias Kirch, MS
Data Lead

Nicholas Box, MPA
Data Analyst

Sydney Strunk, MPH
Research Specialist

Emily Smith, MA
Multimedia Designer

The Regents of the University of Michigan

Jordan B. Acker (Huntington Woods), Michael J. Behm (Grand Blanc), Mark J. Bernstein (Ann Arbor), Paul W. Brown (Ann Arbor), Sarah Hubbard (Okemos), Denise Ilitch (Birmingham), Carl J. Meyers (Dearborn), Katherine E. White (Ann Arbor), Domenico Grasso (ex officio)

The University of Michigan is a Non-discriminatory Employer.

© 2026 Regents of the University of Michigan

Supported by



MICHIGAN MEDICINE
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

**MICHIGAN HEALTH
ENDOWMENT FUND**