Food for Your Brain

Often we think about the importance of feeding our body for optimal health with the right kinds of food. That is an important and essential choice for an abundant full life. However, while we eat impacts our physical and mental health, there is another type of ‘food’ that has an incredible influence on our brain. That is the food that comes not only through our mouth, but through our eyes and ears too.

Scientific studies have documented that what we see (e.g., movies, soap opera, video games), what we read (e.g., books, magazines) and what we listen to (e.g., music) and how long we spend at it, can have a strong influence on our cognitive ability overtime, impacting our brain.

We know that the wrong kind of music, for instance, can produce unhealthy effects on our body but also on our frontal lobe (see page 4). We also know that the right kind of music can have a calming effect for people with anxiety or stress.

Similarly, researchers have also observed that kids and adults who spend too long in front of a screen – and that can be TV, computer, video games, ipad or tablets - also have negative outcomes for physical and mental health. Today kids have too much access to media and screen time and this has been documented as being associated with obesity and other health problems. Note the statistics below about among youth:

**Screen time use:**
- On average, 8- to 18-year-olds spend nearly 4.5 hours watching TV, videos, and DVDs every day
- ~11 hours if you count all media

**Media access:**
- More than two-thirds (71%) of young people have a TV in their bedroom, 1/2 have a video game player, and more than 1/3 have a computer and Internet access

**Parental Rules:**
- Only 28% of all 8- to 18-year-olds say their families have rules about how much time they spend watching TV

**Message from the Health Ministries Director**

- Media use decreases by 3 hours/day in homes with any media rules
- This high tech fast paced age, makes it difficult for individuals and parents to set boundaries. People see multi-tasking as a virtue as they watch TV, tweet, and listen to music at the same time while doing their homework. However, studies show that people who multi-task are not as efficient, and instead, experience more rapid cognitive decline and memory impairment overtime. As parents you can help your kids make healthy choices early on by setting media rules.

In an age with so many options for entertainment and new technology coming at us each week, it is easy to fall prey to imbalance and intemperance when it comes to feeding ourselves the wrong ‘foods’ in quality and in quantity.

If we want to keep our brain sharp and optimize our cognitive abilities and brain potential we must “choose wisely what music to listen to, what to see and read and for how long.” That is one of “10 choices for a full life” recommended in the Bible and in the inspired writings by Ellen White.

The Bible says (in Ecclesiastes 3:1), ‘there is time for everything under the sun.’ If we choose to spend our time unwisely, feeding our brain with poor quality material in music, images or words we may see the negative impact in our memory, mood, and cognitive ability.

On the other hand, if we choose wisely what to feed our senses and how for how long, our mood, memory can improve, and also the ability to think and discern the will of God.


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Health Ministries Resources

- **Adventists InStep for Life (AISFL)** is a Division wide health initiative. The website provides information and resources on how your church, school, or healthcare organization can become involved. Motivate yourself, your family and your church to register and report miles of physical activity. Consider volunteering to be your church, school, or hospital coordinator so you can report miles for others. You can watch previous webinars explaining the initiative or register for upcoming webinars (next one on June 11) at www.adventistsinstepforlife.org.

- **Adventists InStep for Life Mobile Apps** are available for download for android and iPhone users. You must first register at the website listed above then download the app (INSTEP or ADVENTIST INSTEP), and start recording your physical activity right on your phone.

- **Unhooked** is a new series on how the prevention and recovery from unhealthy habits and damaging addictive behaviors. This 28 part series was developed by Adventist Recovery Ministries (ARMin) and Hope Channel to raise awareness and provide hope for people hurting from these compulsive harmful practices. The series is running weekly at Hope Channel, direct TV channel 368 and streamed live online at www.hopetv.org/unhooked. For more information or to watch a trailer of the series check this website or www.adventistrecovery.org.

- **Advertise your health program for free:** The NAD has developed a website with listings of health programs for the public. Anyone can advertise their health outreach program in any city or state in the Division and use the free online registration system which allows you to know ahead of time who is coming, what their contact information is. The site is www.ChooseFullLife.org. To advertise your event simply send information with name and contact info for coordinator, location, time and description of event. If you wish to use our registration system so people can print an entrance ticket, please send us how many seats you have available. The info may be sent to NADHM@nad.adventist.org or click on ‘contact us’ at the website.

- **National Memory Screening Day (Canada):** Early detection of Alzheimer’s Disease is key to slow progression and cognitive decline. Although there currently is no cure for Alzheimer’s disease, there are many ways to prevent it and also available and emerging medical treatments that may slow the progression of symptoms. For resources and information about memory screening day go to http://www.nationalmemoryscreening.ca/about.php.

- **National HIV Testing Day (US):** One in 5 people living with HIV in the U.S. don’t know they have it. You can help change this: spread the word about National HIV Testing Day on June 27. A toolkit is available at for download at http://healthfinder.gov/nho/JuneToolkit.aspx.

**Health Calendar Emphasis -MAY**


USA: [http://www.healthfinder.gov/nho/nho.asp#m8](http://www.healthfinder.gov/nho/nho.asp#m8)

**June 2013**
- Men’s Health Month (US)
- Stroke Awareness Month (Canada)
- 2-3 – National Cancer Survivors Day (US-Canada)
- 10-16- Men’s Health Awareness Week (US)
- 12- National Memory Screening Day (Canada)
- 27- National HIV Testing Day (US)

**Looking Forward (July 2013)**
- Juvenile Arthritis Awareness Month (US)
- Stroke Awareness Month (Canada)
- 11 World Population Day
- 28 World Hepatitis Day

**Dates to Remember**

**2013**

- **June 11 Webinar**
  Adventist InStep for Life
  www.adventistsinstepforlife.org

- **September 22**
  Let’s Move Day
  www.adventistsinstepforlife.org

- **September 22-28**
  Let’s Move Week
  www.adventistsinstepforlife.org

- **September 25-27**
  Aging Conference
  Loma Linda, CA

- **September 28-29**
  Pacific Union HM Training
  NADHM@nad.adventist.org

**2014**

- **January 24-Feb 2**
  NAD Health Summit
  Orlando, FL
  www.NADHealthSummit.com

- **July 8-12**
  Second Global Conference on Health
  Geneva, Switzerland

- **August 28-31**
  Southwestern Union HM Training
  NADHM@nad.adventist.org

- **September 21**
  Let’s Move Day
REACH OUT

NORTH AMERICAN DIVISION

Reaching Native Americans with a Message of Health

SDA Native leaders throughout the North American Division are working with a unique radio project to help Native Americans get free from tobacco addiction. They are invite Seventh-day Adventists throughout the NAD to support this campaign through their prayers and by sharing information about a special two-part mini-series with their American Indian friends, local radio stations, and anyone who is either struggling with tobacco addiction or exposed to second-hand smoke. The mini-series features the Adventist-owned and produced radio show, “American Indian Living,” and represents a partnership between the Seventh-day Adventist Church and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control. Better visibility and web traffic will not only increase the ministry potential of the campaign (by providing needed help to smokers and those exposed to second-hand smoke) but may also help open doors for SDA Native Ministries to collaborate with the CDC on future projects of mutual interest. This series was originally produced and hosted by Dr. David DeRose for the “American Indian Living” radio broadcast. In addition to internet listening, the shows are available free of charge to any radio station. Anyone can download the MP3 files by contacting Dr DeRose at drderose@compasshealth.net.

GEORGIA-CUMBERLAND CONFERENCE

Maranatha Seventh-day Adventist Church

The Maranatha SDA Church held the Southside Community Health and Fitness Fair in conjunction with the Ernie Sims BIG HITS Foundation on Sunday, April 14th from 12 to 5 pm. This year our focus is on providing services and information for veterans, as well as all other disenfranchised members of the community. “Last year the fair drew a crowd of nearly 1,500 with over 40 vendors providing services, information, and other freebies, such as great music, entertainment, and free food and clothing,” said WillieMae Peterkin Musgray.

KENTUCKY-TENNESSEE CONFERENCE

Knoxville SDA Church

The Knoxville SDA Church InStep coordinator, Kimberly Crider, reported a special health outreach that convened hundreds of people this Spring. The special guest speaker was the Plant-based Celebrity Chef Mark Anthony, who kicked off his cooking show tour in east Tennessee at the Church on March 17, 2013. More than 230 community and church residents attended the free show and 75% of those attending were community friends. While Anthony prepared the meal in front of the audience, he shared the health benefits of a plant-based lifestyle, and how this lifestyle adjustment changed his life. Kimberly and her team are serious about continuing to share the good news of Jesus vision for an abundant life and are planning an ongoing calendar of events to follow up with their newly formed community friends.

ADVENTIST HEALTH - WEST

Howard Memorial Hospital & UkiahValley Medical Center

Hospitals Partner in “Biggest Loser” Weight Loss Challenge to inspire employees to adopt healthier lifestyle habits. Howard Memorial Hospital, Ukiah Valley Medical Center and the Mendocino Coast District Hospital have partnered to offer a countywide “Biggest Loser” weight loss challenge that is loosely based on the popular reality TV show. Teams of 3-6 participants are encouraged to participate in the 12-week challenge, which will provide education on lifestyle changes that can help with weight loss and ultimately improve overall health. Prizes will be awarded to the top three teams with the largest percentage of weight loss, as well as the top three individuals. In addition, Howard Memorial Hospital is planning a Community Wellness Program that will create access to programs and education that encourage healthy eating, exercise while nurturing the body, mind and spirit. A new wellness center is planned for construction near the hospital’s five-acre organic garden, which grows food for the hospital, and which will give wellness participants hands-on experience making the connection between health and the food.
**Facts with Hope**

**FACT** Early music choice may indicate later problem behavior. A Netherlands study found that early fans of different types of rock (e.g., rock, heavy metal, gothic, punk), African American music (rhythm and blues, hip-hop), and electronic dance music (trance, techno/hardhouse) showed elevated minor delinquency concurrently and longitudinally. Preferring conventional pop or highbrow music (classic music, jazz), in contrast, was not related to or was negatively related to minor delinquency.

**HOPE** Choose to play only uplifting music in your home and car. In addition, you can influence the type of music your children listen to by teaching them about different music styles and lyrics, and helping them to identify degrading and negative music. The music we listen to impacts the choices we make.

**FACT** Canadian researchers studied 500 children ages 8-10 and found that self-reported screen time was positively associated with waist circumference and negatively associated with HDL cholesterol. The children that spent more time in front of TV, computer and video games, had larger waists and lower HDL cholesterol levels, even after adjusting for exercise, sleep duration, energy intake, and other variables.

**HOPE** In both children and adults, time spent in moderate-to-vigorous physical activity is essential for good health. These results show that in addition to encouraging our children to move more, we can further lower their risk for disease by reducing their overall screen-related sedentary time.

**FACT** Scientists at the Mayo Clinic have found that the use of smartphones and tablets during bedtime can disrupt sleep. Electronic devices are bright light-emitting diodes, which used at night can interfere with melatonin, a hormone that controls the sleep-wake cycle.

**HOPE** Do you spend your last moments before sleep reading on a tablet or checking messages on a smart phone? You can decrease your risk of suppressed melatonin secretion and sleep disturbance by lowering the brightness settings and holding the device at least 14 inches from your face.

**FACT** Having a pet (especially a dog) might lower your risk of heart disease, according to a new American Heart Association scientific statement. A review of previous studies on the influence of pets on human health found that pet owners tend to have lower blood pressure and cholesterol levels, stress, and incidence of obesity. One study of over 5,200 adults showed that dog owners were more active than non-dog owners, and were 54 percent more likely to reach recommended levels of physical activity.

**HOPE** As you consider your leisure time activities, think about the loving relationship you have with your dog. Not only can pets pull at your heartstrings, but they improve your heart health so that you will live a longer and happier life. Perhaps a dog really is “man’s best friend.”

**References:**

*EVERY CHURCH A CENTER FOR HEALTH, HEALING AND WHoleness IN THE COMMUNITY*