Alzheimer's Disease

Dear Center For,

Over 5 million people in the U.S. have Alzheimer’s and the number of people dying from dementia is increasing. Protect your brain; take advantage of this opportunity to learn before it is too late. While medical science is still looking for answers in the treatment of Alzheimer’s disease and to what exactly causes it, we can find solace in the fact that major risk factors to reduce its incidence can be eliminated from our lives. We also know that exercise, a diet high in the Omega 3 compound DHA, and a diet that reduces the risk for heart disease, go a long way in preventing this dreaded disease. The NEWSTART lifestyle utilizes things that can help reduce the risk, and will also add to your diet things that are shown to improve mental function in general.

Following the NEWSTART plan will dramatically decrease your risk of getting Alzheimer’s. In this
issue, you’ll find a goldmine of facts and recipes to help you begin your NEW START today. We hope you enjoy!

All the best,

The NEWSTART Lifestyle Club Team

Featured Video

Alzheimer's Disease
By John Glenn Clark, M.D.

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- Cut Medical Costs
- Increase Longevity
- Experience Invigorating Health!

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Simple Solutions
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Preventing Alzheimer's Disease

By Dr. Galen Comstock

If you're anything like me, the thought of losing your mind to Alzheimer's disease is one of the scariest possibilities of old age. Yet new studies are showing that much can be done to prevent Alzheimer's or slow its progress.

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Featured Recipe

Cashew Coconut Granola
1. Preheat oven to 300° F. In a large bowl, place oats, cashews, coconut, and flax seeds, stirring together.
2. In a small food processor or blender process remaining ingredients.
3. Mix liquid ingredients well with oats and nuts in bowl.
4. Transfer to a large baking dish or tray, spreading it out loosely.
5. Bake 50 – 60 minutes until crunchy and lightly brown.
6. Stir once or twice during the baking to loosen any clumps.

Makes 5 cups or 10 servings

View Ingredients

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Preventing Alzheimer's Disease

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What is Alzheimer's Disease?

Alzheimer’s is a progressive, degenerative disorder that attacks the brain's nerve cells, or neurons, resulting in loss of memory, thinking, and language skills. Marked behavioral changes come as the disease progresses. Yet we must remember, it is not a normal part of aging.

Alzheimer's disease first destroys nerve cells in the hippocampus, causing memory loss. As it progresses, language skills and judgment decline when neurons die in the cerebral cortex.

Some very characteristic pathological changes occur: the buildup of beta-amyloid plaques—sticky clumps of protein fragments and cellular material that form outside and around neurons; and neurofibrillary tangles—twisted fibers composed largely of the protein that build up inside nerve cells. This is like debris and junk building up in the brain that prohibits normal neuron function. These junk substances interfere with neurotransmission by acetylcholine and other neurotransmitters.

Causes of Alzheimer’s Disease

Nobody knows the exact cause of Alzheimer’s disease, or why this debris builds up in the brain. However, some evidence suggests that the same factors that put you at risk of heart disease may also increase the chance that you'll develop Alzheimer's. Examples include:

- Lack of exercise
- Smoking
- High blood pressure
- High cholesterol
- Poorly controlled diabetes and the metabolic syndrome
- Alcohol consumption
- Diets high in animal fat and protein
- Not enough whole fruits and vegetables in the diet
Head injury is another risk factor: The greatest increase in future dementia risk seems to occur after a severe head injury that knocks you out for more than 24 hours. But even smaller injuries repeated over time can also increase the risk. This is a concern with football players.

Since there is no known cure for Alzheimer’s and drugs only delay the most severe symptoms for a short time, prevention of the disease is key. Research on the brain and its functions are revealing several important ways we can help to prevent a decrease in our mental abilities as we age. These include exercise, social interaction and diet.

**Studies Show Exercise Decreases Alzheimer’s Risk**

We may not think of it when we walk up a hill and our hearts beat faster, but the heart’s hard work forces extra blood to the brain, as well as the muscles! WOW! This feeds the brain extra oxygen and extra nutrients, which in turn stimulates brain nerve growth. In other words, when you exercise so does your brain!

The hippocampus is an important structure at the center of your brain which acts as a memory center. It stores spatial memory which is important for short-term and long-term memory.

Fascinating studies have shown that exercise will actually increase the size of the hippocampus and other brain parts. The increased blood flow to the brain during exercise stimulates brain growth, and prevents shrinkage with advancing age. Brain shrinkage has been linked to Alzheimer’s disease and other types of cognitive dysfunction. In turn, increased brain size stimulates production of a nerve restorative protein called “brain derived neurotropic factor (BDNF).” As we age the brain has a tendency to shrink, and as it shrinks it tends to lose function. So whether you actually develop Alzheimer’s or not, exercise can help maintain an optimally functioning brain.

According to the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Science of the United States of America*:

“The hippocampus shrinks in late adulthood, leading to impaired memory and increased risk for dementia. Hippocampal and medial temporal lobe volumes are larger in higher-fit adults, and physical activity training increases hippocampal perfusion…Here we show, in a randomized controlled trial with 120 older adults, that aerobic exercise training increases the size of the anterior hippocampus, leading to improvements in spatial memory. Exercise training increased hippocampal volume by 2%, effectively reversing age-related loss in volume by 1 to 2 years. We also demonstrate that increased hippocampal volume is associated with greater serum levels of BDNF, a mediator of neurogenesis …”

In simpler words, the more we exercise, the more the brain grows, the better the mental performance, and the less risk for Alzheimer’s disease. In a jet set society, quick wits and mental sharpness are virtually a must.

In another fascinating study recently published in the medical journal Neurology, individuals who were more physically active had a significantly decreased risk of developing Alzheimer’s
disease. The interesting point in this study is one did not need to be in a formal aerobic exercise program; simply, the more one moved around the less the risk of Alzheimer’s.

Researchers from Rush University Medical Center asked 716 older individuals without dementia to wear a device called an actigraph that monitors activity for 10 days. All physical activity was recorded. Individuals also were given a panel of mental tests each year to measure memory and thinking abilities.

During about three and a half years of follow-up, 71 people developed Alzheimer's disease. Those who were in the bottom 10 percent for daily physical activity were more than twice as likely to develop Alzheimer's disease as those in the top 10 percent.

According to the new study, all physical activity helps to decrease your Alzheimer’s risk. Everything you do in 24 hours adds up and counts as part of total daily activity. It is not just walking and running or formal exercise, but older people should be encouraged to make their lifestyle more active. Parking your car further from the store, walking to town instead of driving, even sweeping the patio makes a difference. Something little like washing the dishes or walking up a couple of extra stairs will add up over the course of a day and will benefit you over the course of time. So let’s move! Let’s get up out of our easy chairs, and do something!

Social and Mental Stimulation Reduce Alzheimer’s Risk

Studies have found an association between lifelong involvement in mentally and socially stimulating activities and reduced risk of Alzheimer's disease. Such factors that may reduce your risk of Alzheimer's include:

- Higher levels of formal education
- A stimulating job
- Mentally challenging leisure activities, such as reading, playing games, or playing a musical instrument
- Frequent social interactions
- Being married
- Meaningful relationships, such as involvement in church and community activities

Reducing Your Risk through Diet

With any chronic disease such as Alzheimer’s it is important that we consider how diet can help prevent the disease or slow its progress. We have already learned that there are links with a high fat diet and Alzheimer’s disease. We know too that the same dietary factors that increase the risk of Coronary Artery Disease also increase the risk of Alzheimer’s Disease. Notably, these are a diet with heavy consumption of animal products (meat, eggs, milk and cheese). But there is also some evidence that the addition of certain foods to the diet will help stave off the disease.

UCLA neuroscientists have shown for the first time that a diet high in the omega-3 fatty acid DHA helps protect the brain against the memory loss and cell damage caused by Alzheimer's
The new research reported in the journal Neuron suggests that a DHA-rich diet may lower one's risk of Alzheimer's disease and help slow progression of the disorder in its later stages. DHA is found in fish but the fish get it from the ocean plants and algae. So where do we get algae if we want to remain vegetarian? If a person eats microalgae one would be getting DHA first hand. Spirulina is a good source of algae. There are other sources available from your health food store. Other omega-3 and anti-inflammatory foods would also be wise additions to help prevent the disease. These would include flax seed, almonds, walnuts and greens such as bok choy, kale, collards, and mustard. Even though foods such as salmon, chicken, and eggs are highly touted sources of omega-3s and other essential nutrients, it is not necessary as the same nutrients can be obtained from these vegetarian sources.

Avoid Alzheimer’s and Experience Peak Mental Performance

So whether you are interested in maintaining good mental performance or wanting to avoid the worst form of mental deterioration, the answers are the same: keep active, socially connected, eat a healthy diet, and love life to its fullest.

Galen Comstock

Dr. Galen Comstock, a native of Loma Linda, California, graduated from Loma Linda University School of Medicine in 1974. He completed a Family Practice residency at Glendale Adventist Medical Center in 1978 and became Board Certified in Family Practice. Afterward, he practiced near Lake Elsinore, CA for 11 years. Since then, Dr. Comstock has done extensive health lecturing, research, and written articles for numerous publications.
Cashew Coconut Granola

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2. In a small food processor or blender process remaining ingredients.

3. Mix liquid ingredients well with oats and nuts in bowl.

4. Transfer to a large baking dish or tray, spreading it out loosely.

5. Bake 50 – 60 minutes until crunchy and lightly brown.

6. Stir once or twice during the baking to loosen any clumps.

Makes 5 cups or 10 servings

Ingredients

- 3 c. rolled oats (or half rolled and half quick oats)
- 2/3 c. raw or dry roasted whole cashews
- 1/2 c. unsweetened shredded coconut
- 1/2 c. ground flaxseeds
- 1/3 c. almond or cashew butter
- 1/2 c. maple syrup
- 2 tbsp. vanilla
- 1/2 tsp. cinnamon (optional)
- Pinch of salt

Tags: Breakfast, Oil Free, Soy Free, American