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**Brain Research Shows That Diet and Exercise are Keys to Living Well**

**By ARA Content**

**Brain Research Shows That Diet and Exercise are Keys to Living Well**

by: **ARA Content**

(ARA) – An old adage says that aging is a state of mind, but new research is beginning to prove it.

As brain research advances, experts are finding that some of the physical and mental changes normally associated with aging may not actually be normal at all, but instead, the result of treatable and preventable health conditions. In fact, by some estimates, only 30 percent of physical aging can be traced to our genes. The rest is up to each individual.

According to the AARP Andrus Foundation, developing and maintaining good "cognitive health" is as important to a person's quality of life at any age as maintaining good physical health. A series of four new booklets, "Staying Sharp: Current Advances in Brain Research," provides information and tips based on this new research. The booklets were derived from a series of public forums that were conducted in partnership with the Dana Alliance for Brain Initiatives, and featured the country's foremost researchers, scientists and physicians working in the field of aging and the brain. These four booklets provide some of the most up-to-date information available.

One of the key findings of this new research is that diet and exercise are crucial not just for physical well being, but also for mental acuity at any age.

**The Importance of Diet**

The food choices we make throughout our lives can make a difference in the likelihood for many diseases that cause premature death or disability, including heart disease, cancer, stroke and diabetes. Three long-term studies being conducted by the Harvard School of Public Health have followed 300,000 people and suggest that: a diet rich in vegetables may help prevent breast and prostate cancer colon cancer is more common among those who eat more red meat high-fat diets increase the risk of heart disease, stroke and some cancers a diet with too many refined carbohydrates increases the risk of obesity, diabetes and heart disease.

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Although there are some nutritional changes associated with aging, for the most part, what was considered a healthy diet at 40 will still be a healthy diet at 60 or 70. Health experts recommend a diet that emphasizes whole grains and fresh fruits and vegetables as well as other tips: Drink eight to 10 cups of fluid every day, and make at least five of those water. Limit caffeinated and alcoholic beverages. Reduce the amount of saturated fat in your diet and replace it with monounsaturated fat such as that in olive, canola, sunflower, safflower and soybean oils. When snacking, choose fruits, vegetables or whole-grain products. Make eating fun by sharing dinnertime with family and friends, or joining community functions whenever possible.

### The Benefits of Exercise

Many experts believe that regular exercise is the single most important thing anyone can do to improve overall health and well-being. New studies show that aerobic activity increases levels of brain

chemicals that encourage the growth of nerve cells, which may be the reason moderately strenuous exercise is associated with enhanced memory skills.

Some ways that exercise can help retain mental capacity include: reducing anxiety and stress improving mood and possibly alleviating depression improving sleep increasing energy levels slowing the rate of bone loss enabling the body to use insulin more efficiently improving cardiovascular health controlling weight and preventing obesity

The National Institute of Aging suggests incorporating four types of exercises into your life. Endurance exercise, such as walking, helps increase stamina. Strength exercise, with free weights or resistance weights, increases metabolism and may help prevent osteoporosis. Flexibility exercise, such as stretching or yoga, prevents and aids recovery from injuries. And balance exercises, such as standing on one foot, help prevent falls.

By following these basic tips, as well as any advice from your physician related to any specific health conditions, it is possible to live well in old age as opposed to just living into old age.

The AARP Andrus Foundation's "Staying Sharp" series can be downloaded from the association's Web site at [www.andrus.org/sharp/sharp\\_pubs.html](http://www.andrus.org/sharp/sharp_pubs.html). Each booklet covers a specific area: Memory Loss and Aging; Depression; Chronic Health Issues and Quality of Life. The booklets also are available by mail from AARP Fulfillment, 601 E Street NW, Washington, DC 20049, or by phone at 800-424-3410 and ask for series D17561 to get the booklets in English or D17461 to get the booklets in Spanish.

Courtesy ARA Content,

; e-mail:

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** The AARP Andrus Foundation provides knowledge and education through research which helps find solutions to the challenges of aging as well as approaches to maintaining independence and dignity throughout life. Established in 1968 as a memorial to Dr. Ethel Percy Andrus, the foundation is a 501 (c) 3 charitable and educational organization affiliated with the AARP.

## **Use Ginkgo Biloba to Starve Off Alzheimer's and Dementia**

**By Rudy Silva**

Dementia, Alzheimer's, and other mental diseases are accelerated by the,

- \* The lack of blood to the brain
- \* The lack of oxygen to the brain
- \* The lack of minerals and vitamins to the brain
- \* The lack of glucose to the brain
- \* Increase of toxins to the brain.

The lack of blood to the brain is caused by arteriosclerosis – plack buildup along the arteries causing them to narrow. Arteriosclerosis occurs when you have a diet that causes damage to the artery walls promoting cholesterol and other minerals and nutrients to patch up the damage. Over time, as this patching continues, this area will become narrow and in some case blocks the flow of blood.

As early as possible it is always recommended that you research what a health diet is. Find a diet that will minimize damage and inflammation in your body. Starting a healthy diet at any age is helpful but the sooner you start the better.

Ginkgo Biloba has been found effective in increasing the circulation of blood throughout the body including the brain. When this happens more blood moves into the brain and supplies it with the nutrients in the blood.

Ginkgo Biloba also helps brain cells use glucose and thereby increases brain energy. It helps improve brain cell transmission and brain wave tracing. It helps short-term memory by speeding up the brain cell impulses.

Using Ginkgo Biloba for dementia and Alzheimer's has show to slow down, delay, and even reverse these conditions in some cases. Use of Ginkgo Biloba is more effective when used in the early signs of senility, dementia, or Alzheimer's.

If Alzheimer's is well progressed, Ginkgo may have only a slight value. But when Alzheimer's and other dementia issue are due arteriosclerosis or lack of blood to the brain, then Ginkgo may provide some relief and improvement in these conditions.

Here is the type of Ginkgo you should use:

- \* Ginkgo Biloba Flavonglycosides Extract 24%, 40 mg per day

Results in using Ginkgo Biloba can take from 3 – 12 weeks. It is a safe herb and may only have slight

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side effects such as headaches and dizziness, but these will disappear as you continue to use it.

If you are faced with signs of reduced mental capacity, Ginkgo Biloba is but one nutrients that can help you starve off it progression. There are many other nutrients that you need to add to your diet to help Ginkgo Biloba do its job better.

Rudy Silva is a Natural Nutritionist. To learn more about the other nutrients you need to hold off signs of dementia or Alzheimer's go to

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