

Walk off the Cholesterol and Increase Cognitive memory

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Menopause, Andropause And Other Hormone Imbalances
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By Pauline Robinson

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If you hear a little voice inside say, "Go for a walk," that might be your brain telling you what it needs.

I've just come across two new studies that reveal how the simple act of taking a walk each day may offer significant protection from one of the most feared of all health problems.

Mission: healthy cognition

Cognitive decline is a symptom that signals the possible onset of Alzheimer's disease, which is the leading cause of dementia among aging adults. In September, the Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA) published two studies that specifically address the effects of light exercise on cognitive decline in older women and dementia in elderly men.

Researchers at the Harvard School of Public Health conducted the first study. Questionnaires were used to assess physical activity levels and exercise patterns for more than 18,700 women, aged 70 to 81 years. The questionnaires covered a minimum of nine years, and were followed up with two telephone interviews with each subject to assess cognitive health measures such as memory and attention span.

In the conclusion to the study, the Harvard team wrote that significantly better cognitive function and less cognitive decline were both strongly associated with "long-term regular physical

activity, including walking."

Lead researcher, Jennifer Weuve, ScD., told Internet Broadcasting Systems that women who walked two to three hours at an easy pace each week "performed significantly better on these tests of cognition than women who walked less than one hour per week." And even less cognitive decline was noted in women who walked six or more hours each week.

These results reminded me of another benefit of regular walking among women. In the e-Alert "Second Pass" (4/5/04), I told you about a six-year breast cancer study that included data on more

than 74,000 women over the age of 50. Researchers found that women who exercise regularly have lower breast cancer rates. And in many cases, only a couple of hours of brisk walking each week may provide enough exercise to reduce breast cancer risk.

Men on the march

In the second JAMA study, researchers at the University of Virginia School of Medicine looked at the association between walking exercise and the risk of dementia in men aged 71 to 93.

The Virginia team collected three years of exercise data on more than 2,200 men enrolled in the Honolulu-Asia Aging Study. At the outset of the study, none of the men had been diagnosed with dementia or conditions that would prevent them from walking (such as stroke or Parkinson's disease). Over the course of several years, two follow up examinations were conducted to assess neurological health.

Almost 160 of the men developed dementia during the study period. Researchers found that men who walked between a quarter mile and one mile per day had a lower risk of dementia than those who walked less than a quarter mile each day. But in the case of this study, more was clearly better because men who walked less than a quarter mile per day had nearly TWICE the risk of dementia compared to those who walked more than two miles each day.

Walking cholesterol down

What is it about taking a daily walk that might prevent cognitive decline and dementia? It could have something to do with cholesterol's association to Alzheimer's disease.

Previous research has suggested that high cholesterol levels may increase the level of a certain protein that is abnormally processed by people with Alzheimer's disease. This abnormal processing sets off a chain reaction that causes a peptide to accumulate and form tangles that can kill brain cells.

A Georgetown University Medical Center study showed how high cholesterol levels significantly increase the rate at which these tangles are formed. In addition, the researchers concluded that high cholesterol also increases the production of a different protein that transports cholesterol out of the cell. And while that's a normal function, in this situation it results in an unfortunate increase of

free cholesterol, which has a toxic effect on nerve cells.

Of course, daily exercise is one of the best and safest ways to control cholesterol levels. Neither the Harvard nor the Virginia researchers speculated on why regular exercise through walking might have helped prevent cognitive decline and dementia, but it seems likely that reducing cholesterol levels may have come into play.

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<http://www.air-water-nutrition-healthsmart.com> For more health information check out the on-line encyclopedia of natural health.

http://www.healthsmart-nutrition.com/developer2004/home/index.php?site_id=1&go_id=2&take_id=5

What Is Cholesterol

By Jan Nicholas

In order to understand why it is important to lower cholesterol, it is necessary to first understand what cholesterol is. Cholesterol is a fatlike waxy substance and is produced by the liver. Although cholesterol has purposes and is important to overall health and body function, too much cholesterol in the body has damaging effects.

Cholesterol forms every cell within the body. When the cholesterol level is appropriate, it plays a life-giving role in many functions of the body. When cholesterol is at a good level it works to build and repair cells, produces hormones such as estrogen and testosterone, and produces bile acids which are proven to aid in the digestion of fat.

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With too much cholesterol in the body, though, the levels build up and cause damage by clogging your arteries. This puts you at serious risk for disease such as heart and stroke. In fact, the major cause behind heart attacks and strokes is clogged arteries resulting from high levels of cholesterol.

When you eat saturated foods such as dairy, meat and eggs your cholesterol elevates. On the other hand when you eat foods such as fruits, vegetables, and grains you can maintain optimal health as they do not contain cholesterol.

High cholesterol can be avoided! With a nutritious diet, the 50% of all adult Americans with high cholesterol can regain their health and lower their risk of disease by 2%. This is done simply from reducing cholesterol by 1%.

Cholesterol can be managed for life with success! It is recommended that you visit your physician on a regular basis to keep a keen eye on your levels.

STOP! If you need to lower your cholesterol fast, go to

today!



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