

COGNITIVE HEALTH

July 2019



Nasal Neurons Regenerate

Olfactory receptor cells, the neurons in our nose that allow us to smell, are neurons that can regenerate throughout life. Although these cells are continually being born and dying, they maintain the same connections as their ancestors. The result is that once we learn a smell, it always smells the same to us—despite the fact that there are always new neurons smelling it!

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Compliments of



TBI and Dementia

It is estimated that nearly 1.5 million people each year sustain a traumatic brain injury (TBI). Although TBI is the leading cause of death and disability among children and young adults, many people suffer with the lasting effects of TBI, both with and without loss of consciousness.

In the largest study ever of TBI and its connections to dementia, the Veteran's Administration (VA) has compiled data from roughly 350,000 patients who were diagnosed with various levels of severity. This study, part of the Chronic Effects of Neurotrauma Consortium, was designed to understand the long-term implications of TBI in the military.

The study determined that veterans who suffer a TBI are more than double the risk of a dementia diagnosis later in life. There is some disagreement about the linkage between TBI and later development of dementia. Some scientists argue dementia may be related to the physical injury to the brain. Meanwhile, others believe that head trauma may cause toxin and protein buildup that leads to dementia later in life. Regardless, this study underscores the urgent need for researchers to develop mechanisms, prevention and treatment of TBI-related dementia.

Although there is an increased risk for dementia among those who have experienced a TBI, that does not mean everyone with TBI is guaranteed this fate. TBI is only one of many risk factors for dementia, including genetic markers, that are being studied. No matter what risk factors you may have, it's important to understand that 'prevention' is the best available treatment and that the most modifiable lifestyle factor that can help to prevent dementia is the early treatment of hearing loss.



Ask One of the Clarity Specialists

Q: When is the best time to treat my hearing loss?

A: A.S.A.P. Hearing loss is associated with increased rates of diabetes, heart disease, kidney disease, thyroid disease, falling, and the development of dementia.

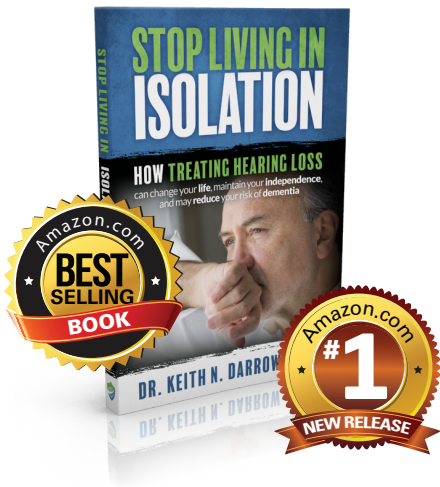
The longer you wait, the more you are depriving the brain of proper auditory stimulation, often referred to as auditory deprivation. Your brain is not getting the proper auditory stimulation and auditory cues that it needs to run at 100%. The brain is a very simple "Use it or Lose It" mechanism, and auditory input can help to provide the proper, constant stimulation our brains are accustomed to and designed to receive.

Hearing is not a sense to take for granted. Yet the statistics are alarming—it is estimated that only 20% of individuals with hearing loss actually seek medical treatment. Without the proper treatment of hearing loss, the brain is being asked to work on overload, constantly. I often use the analogy "living with untreated hearing loss is like asking your brain to drive sixty miles per hour in second gear."

In neuroscience, we call this "Cognitive Overload"—asking the brain to process auditory, visual, and other cues just to put together a simple sentence.

From the
DOCTOR'S DESK

Patients frequently ask the same questions before, during, and even after treatment. These questions are very important to know and understand before seeking medical treatment for hearing loss. Last summer, in between traveling to 13 cities speaking on Cognitive Aspects of Hearing Loss I wrote a book that answer these, and many other, questions for those who may be in need of a guide on choosing an audiologist and treatment. "Stop Living in Isolation" will thoroughly answer your questions and prepare you and your loved ones to make the best medical decision for you, your family, and your overall health.



HEARING HEALTH CARE NEWS

We are now in the thralls of Summer, and hopefully this means a little time for rest and relaxation for you and your family! July is the month we take to celebrate our country's heritage. As we pay homage to our flag and everything it stands for – unity of country and family – we remember the heroes that have come before us and allow us to proudly fly this flag and celebrate our love of country and each other.

Unfortunately, for many people living with untreated hearing loss, the summer is another lost opportunity to experience the fullness of quality of life and relationships with others. But it doesn't have to be this way. The early treatment of hearing loss has significant health and cognitive benefits, including reducing the risk of developing Dementia.

This month we will highlight the many medical conditions recognized during July and how they relate to your Hearing Health Care needs. As always, the push is to educate you, your family and loved ones on how your hearing health care is a vital piece of your overall health care; and how healthy hearing is necessary for a healthy you. This month our country recognizes many medical conditions, including: Eye Injury Prevention Month, UV Safety Month and National Cleft & Craniofacial Awareness & Prevention Month. We will explore a few of these, and how they relate to your most important sense - hearing!

Eye Injury Prevention Month: Some people say 'your eyes are the windows to your soul', and perhaps they are right, because your eyes are truly linked to your cognitive function and well-being. A breakthrough technique to measure cognitive function is 'Pupillometry' – a measurement of pupil size that correlates to the amount of mental effort (e.g. the more mental effort the larger the pupil size). Recent studies have found that individuals who treat their hearing loss exert significantly less effort listening to a conversation in background noise, than people who do not treat their hearing loss. This increased effort, referred to as cognitive

load, is linked to cognitive decline and Dementia.

Proper vision health is also important, as it too can reduce our risks of cognitive decline. Recent reporting in major scientific journals, including reports from the National Institutes of Health, has made significant strides in understanding the links of vision loss and cognitive decline. Although much work is still to be done, scientists and medical clinicians accept data that indicates people with distance vision problems are 2-3 times more likely to develop cognitive impairment (compared to those with normal vision).

The prevalence of blindness and vision impairment increases rapidly with age among all racial and ethnic groups. Cases of early age-related macular degeneration and diabetic retinopathy are expected to double and quadruple, respectively, in the next 20-30 years.

Elderly people with untreated poor vision are significantly more likely to suffer from Alzheimer's disease and other forms of Dementia than their normal seeing counterparts, according to a study published in the American Journal of Epidemiology. Poor vision, like poor hearing, can reduce the amount of social and physical activities in adults – thus increasing the risk of developing Dementia. In addition, according to the American Optometric Association, significant near-vision loss in older age may correlate with increased Dementia risk.

UV Safety Month: Coming from a family of self-proclaimed 'Beachologists', I have spent much of my summers in the sun, and now spend plenty of time visiting my Dermatologist! Fortunately, there are ways to protect yourself from the sun's damaging UV-B and UV-A rays, both of which can damage your eyes and skin. Too much UV exposure can cause vision problems, damage to your eyes, suppress the immune system and cause skin cancer. Fortunately, you can minimize risk with some simple tips, including wearing a hat and protective clothing, staying in the shade and using (the right) sunscreen.

COGNITIVE GAME OF THE MONTH

Word Search

Instructions: Find the words listed.

SUNSHINE
SUMMER
WATERMELON
FAMILY
SWIMMING
VACATION

FUN
POPSICLE
SUNSCREEN
POOL
FRUIT

E T M F I Z E I F N P O O L I V N L U C W S D P T E
N I M E U C E L E J C K F Z T A G R D G I W O I N G
O U S E Y N I E W K O C Y A D C D A W A U P G L K J
L R Q W H L R S U N S H I N E A X U U Y S D C E E M
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M E C D S M A M X N E F V P S I N E C W C Y R N A A
R A T N S X M O A X I D E N H O Y L Q R L W Y S W M
E A U A Y G H I U F J Q E F B N E B V V R R L N C F
T S X L J J I W N U J Q K G G Q R Q L E C N S Y K D
A Q U H H X E J F G E Q J G D S F M C Z I O T M S J
W J D O E Y I D E C W Z J M C L V R V H K D L V C J



Pecan-Crusted Chicken

Adding pecans to the bread crumb coating adds a flavor boost and makes this recipe super brain healthy.

■ INGREDIENTS

- 4 boneless skinless chicken breasts, 6 to 8 oz. each
- 1 1/2 teaspoons salt, divided
- 1 teaspoon lemon juice
- 1 1/2 cups plain yogurt
- 2 tablespoons Dijon mustard
- 2 cups pecans, finely chopped
- 1 cup bread crumbs
- olive oil for sautéing

■ DIRECTIONS

Use a mallet to pound chicken breasts into a uniform 1/2 inch thickness. Cut each breast into 2 or 3 pieces for manageability.

Combine lemon juice, yogurt, mustard, and 1/2 teaspoon salt in a bowl and set aside. Put chicken pieces in mixture and let sit for about 10 minutes.

Combine pecans, crumbs, and 1 teaspoon salt in a bowl and set aside.

Heat about 1 tablespoon olive oil in a sauté pan over medium high heat. Wipe excess yogurt off chicken and dredge in pecan mixture. When oil is hot, add chicken pieces to pan and cook about 3-4 minutes on each side until golden brown on the outside and cooked through. You may need to do it in batches, in which case you should wipe the pan out between batches and add a bit more oil.

Serve immediately.

You can use any kind of plain yogurt for this, whether it's full-fat, low-fat, or non-fat. All will work well for the recipe.

Brain Healthy Ingredients:

Chicken, Nuts



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