

COGNITIVE HEALTH

August 2019



When Eating is Tearful

The expression “crying crocodile tears” means expressing insincere grief. It arose because crocodiles appear to weep while they are happily munching on prey. A neurological disorder in humans called crocodile tears results from damage to the fifth cranial nerve, which controls the mucous membranes of the face. When the affected person is eating, signals that should stimulate salivation instead stimulate lacrimation--better known as crying.

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Does your heart skip a beat?

Nearly 10% of people over the age of 65 skip a heartbeat on a regular basis. ‘A-Fib’ (atrial fibrillation) is an irregular heartbeat (arrhythmia) that can lead to various heart-related complications such as blood clots, stroke, and heart failure.

Perhaps the most disheartening fact about A-Fib is that it can occur without any signs or symptoms and, if left untreated, can result in life-threatening complications.

A-Fib is the most common arrhythmia diagnosed in clinical practice. Abnormalities or damage to the heart’s structure are the most common cause of atrial fibrillation. You’re more likely to develop A-Fib if you have high blood pressure, coronary heart disease, heart defects, rheumatic heart disease, or pericarditis. Hyperthyroidism, obesity, diabetes, kidney disease, sleep apnea, and a family history of A-Fib are also contributors.

Now comes the sobering news: A-Fib might increase the risk of dementia. Researchers at the University College of Medicine in Seoul Korea noted that the link between A-Fib and dementia was found even among people who hadn’t suffered a stroke.

In an interview, Dr. Joung noted “We found that the people who developed atrial fibrillation had a 50% increased risk of developing dementia compared to those who did not develop the condition; this increased risk remained even after we removed those who suffered a stroke from our calculations.”

The silver lining though, is that people with A-Fib who took blood thinners to help prevent a stroke appeared to reduce their risk for developing dementia.

Maintaining a healthy heart, a healthy lifestyle, and addressing the associated medical conditions of dementia, such as treating hearing loss, can all go a long way to helping more people prevent dementia.



Ask One of the Clarity Specialists

Q: Why can't we wait until next year to treat my hearing loss?

A: Hearing loss, for some reason, seems to be the perfect thing for patients to try and put off “until next year.” Patients will try to rationalize their hearing loss: “Oh, this is normal for my age” or “Everybody mumbles.”

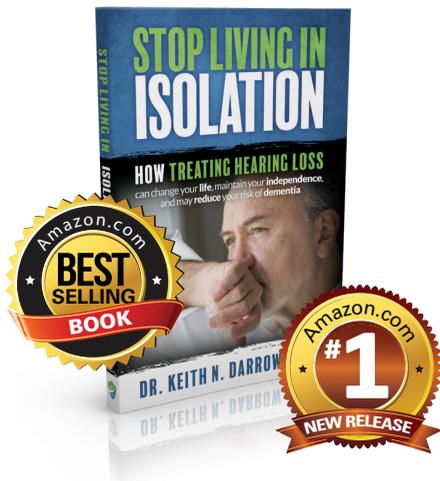
If patients don’t understand the unintended consequences of waiting to treat hearing loss and the medical conditions associated with hearing loss, how can they be expected to understand the importance of starting treatment of hearing loss today!

Simply stated, the organ of hearing (the cochlea) has a finite amount of receptor cells—referred to as hair cells. The hair cells are akin to the rods and cones of the eye, which receive stimulation and pass along the information as a complex series of neurochemical signals to the brain. As we age, like most mammals roaming the planet, humans are genetically predetermined to suffer the effects of age-related hearing loss.

With this progressive degenerative disorder, there is a gradual, continual loss of hair cells within the cochlea. As each cell dies with age and excessive exposure to noise (compounded by the combination of the two), the cells will die and so too will the attached neurons.

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

Summer continues to grip most of us across the country. August, one of my favorite months, is the second to be named after a Roman emperor, Augustus.

As we begin our venture towards the autumn months (and perhaps you can feel the pending transition on a crisp August evening), it is important that we continue to take the best care of ourselves and each other. Life is fragile and too short, no matter how long most of us will live. We are (to some extent) in control of how we live our lives; and we have significant input on determining our health. Even regular visits to your primary care physician can help keep most medical conditions at bay.

This month our country recognizes many medical conditions, including: Psoriasis Awareness Month, National Immunization Awareness Month and Gastroparesis Awareness Month. We will explore each of these, and how they relate to your most important sense - hearing!

Psoriasis Awareness Month: If you or a loved one have psoriasis, it is time to get your hearing checked and begin treatment as early as possible! Results from a study published in the American Journal of Clinical Dermatology suggested that people with psoriasis can be significantly more likely to develop hearing loss; specifically, the type referred to as sudden-onset sensorineural hearing loss. This hearing loss is unlike the slow progressive nature related to aging, rather this type of hearing loss occurs suddenly (as the name implies) and is most often detrimental resulting in permanent injury to the auditory nervous system. People with psoriasis are about 50 percent more likely to be diagnosed with sudden sensorineural hearing loss than people without psoriasis, according to the study. Additional reports have found that people with psoriatic arthritis may be more susceptible to hearing loss, too. According to those findings, almost a third of people with psoriatic arthritis had hearing loss, compared with less than 7 percent of people without psoriatic arthritis.

National Immunization Awareness Month: Many factors contribute to the development of hearing loss. Most people can list both noise exposure and aging as obvious culprits; however, less known, but still as potent, is the ability for infections to cause significant damage to the auditory system, including cognitive function. Several diseases known to be dangerous to overall health also cause hearing loss. In fact, if you know somebody who tells you 'I was born with normal hearing, but lost my hearing during childhood', chances are very high that person suffered from an infection that impacted his/her sense of hearing.

Gastroparesis Awareness Month: Gastroparesis is a disease of the muscles of the stomach or the nerves controlling the muscles that causes the muscles to stop working. Gastroparesis results in inadequate grinding of food by the stomach, and poor emptying of food from the stomach into the intestine – which often leads to nausea, vomiting and abdominal pain. Gastroparesis can be caused either by diseases of the stomach's muscles or the nerves that control the muscles; but the most common disease that results in gastroparesis is diabetes.

Diabetes, affecting nearly 31 million people, significantly increases the risk of developing hearing loss and Dementia. Dementia and Diabetes starve your brain, and tangles and twists vital cells. Diabetes is not a normal part of aging. Diabetes affects your body's ability to produce or use insulin that will then remain in your blood stream. One of the most devastating effects of Diabetes is its impact on small blood vessels throughout the body which impacts major organs including your intestines, heart, eyes and ears.

Check back next month for more on our 'Hearing Health Care News™' series to learn about how hearing is the key to an active and healthy lifestyle as you age.

COGNITIVE GAME OF THE MONTH

Cryptogram

Instructions: Find the missing letters.

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
25																		24							

A

S

A

A

13 21 25 7 26 13

18 24

26 13 21

6 21 25 7

15 21 25 7 26 13



Strawberry Cucumber Salsa with Basil and Lime

We have known for quite some time that dietary antioxidants offer a great deal of health benefits for both the brain and the body. Researchers who have focused on a particular antioxidant called fisetin had previously found that it seemed to improve memory, and recently found that it can improve the symptoms of Alzheimer's. The best sources of fisetin? Strawberries and cucumbers.

■ INGREDIENTS

- 2 cups fresh strawberries, hulled and finely chopped
- 1 cup cucumber, skin on, finely chopped
- 1 small serrano pepper, seeds removed, finely chopped
- 1/4 cup red onion, finely chopped
- 3 Tbsp fresh lime juice
- 1 Tbsp olive oil
- 1/4 cup basil leaves, torn into pieces
- 1 tsp salt

■ DIRECTIONS

Combine ingredients in a bowl and stir well. Allow to sit 30-60 minutes before serving, to let the flavors meld and marry. Serve with tortilla chips or pita chips.

If you want to make this ahead, combine everything except the salt and lime juice and add those before serving – otherwise the strawberries and cucumbers will break down too much.



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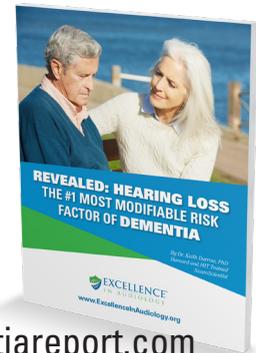
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