

HEARING HEALTH CARE NEWS™

DECEMBER 2018



Welcome to our December 2018 edition of Hearing Health Care News™!

With the traditional time upon us when families come together to celebrate the holidays, many of us get caught up in the shuffle of planning and preparing for the season. Many speak of feeling stressed by the prospect of organizing celebrations; the kids, their spouses, the grandparents, the presents, the food and usually the relocation of all of the above! Amidst the chaos, it is easy to lose sight of what matters most – having our health and having our loved ones close.

As we age or care for family members who are aging, concerns mount over both physical and cognitive health. Often times we ask ourselves *'Will I be able to afford my everyday living and my health care?'*, *'Will I have the physical and cognitive capacity to stay in my own home?'*, and *'What can I do to stay as physically and cognitively healthy as possible?'*

Aging is Inevitable. Decline is Optional. Which do you choose?

Breakthrough. We are each an active participant in our own health care and the health care of our loved ones. We have the ability to take control of our health and steer our future in the right direction in order to ensure that we take the best care of ourselves and our loved ones too. To do so, we must remain vigilant and up to date on current research and understand its implications in our lives. A powerful research report has recently made headlines in newspapers across the globe which highlights advances in the treatment and regulation of memory loss, cognitive decline and Dementia - stoking fear and excitement in those of us concerned about our cognitive health as we age.

Cognition, including the ability to learn new things, intuition, judgment, language and remembering are fleeting processes in individuals diagnosed with

Dementia. Unfortunately, to date there is not a viable cure for Dementia other than prevention; however, an FDA approved Phase II trial may change this abysmal outlook.

Currently, world-leading brain experts at West Virginia University's Rockefeller Neuroscience Institute are celebrating the historic breakthrough which Alzheimer patients around the globe have been waiting for.

"For Alzheimer's, there's not that many treatments available, despite hundreds of clinical trials over the past two decades and billions of dollars spent," said Dr. Ali R. Rezai, a neurosurgeon at WVU who led the team of investigators that successfully performed a Phase II trial using focused ultrasound to treat a patient with early stage Alzheimer's.

The premise of this research is based on the recent finding that ultrasound waves are capable of reversibly opening the otherwise impenetrable blood-brain barrier; a barrier designed to protect our brain from infections.

The study will focus on patients who have symptoms of early Alzheimer's disease and who have plaques showing up on brain imaging. Dr. Rezai described the plaques as, "clumps of sticky proteins in the brain that slow down transmission of nerve impulses and signals in the brain and cause so much of the problems associated with this disorder."

The Phase II trial has three objectives. One, to evaluate the safety of the procedure. Although ultrasound has been used for countless years in patients, using the procedure to penetrate the blood-brain barrier is new in human trials. Two, to measure a patient's improvements in cognitive function and reduction in cognitive decline. This may take months to years to determine the effectiveness of the treatment. Three, to determine if this treatment protocol can reduce the number of beta-amyloid plaques (a trademark of the disease) in the

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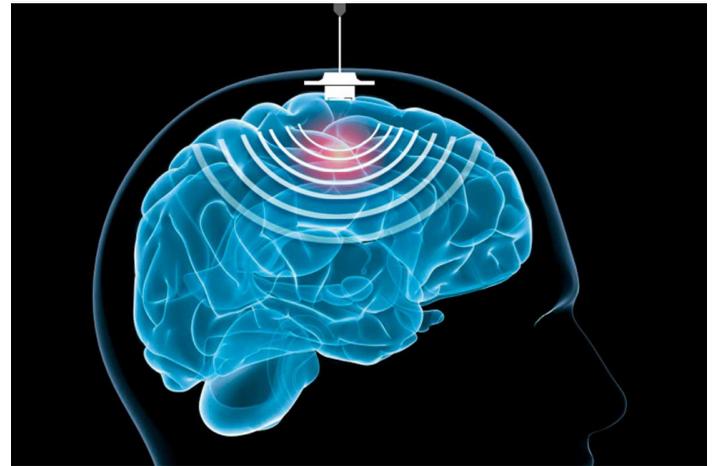
brain. Again, this reduction may take months to years and perhaps several treatments to achieve.

The procedure involves the use of ultrasound waves focused through a specialized helmet that can open up the barrier. The WVU team targeted the cognitive centers of the brain impacted by plaque clusters that impair memory in patients with Alzheimer's. Prior studies in animals have found that these plaques can be cleared with ultrasound stimulation.

The first patient to undergo the procedure, Judi Polak, who was diagnosed with early-onset Alzheimer's, is a former health care clinician from the WVU health center. Perhaps someday she will become a household name as the woman who helped lead the path to curing Alzheimer's.

During this time of year when we are blessed to spend time with our loved ones and family, below is a list of common signs of early-onset Dementia to be aware of:

- Memory Difficulties
- Confusion
- Becoming Easily Overwhelmed
- Difficulty Learning New Tasks
- Decreased Ability to Be Flexible
- Occasional Word-Finding Difficulties



- Decreased Efficiency
- Subtle Personality Changes
- Distrust or Paranoia
- Increased Reliance on Others

To learn more about hearing health care, cognitive health care, and how to take the best care of yourself and loved ones as you age, go to www.HearingUnlimited.net to read more about the importance of proper health care. Take comfort in knowing that knowledge is power.

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Recommended by
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