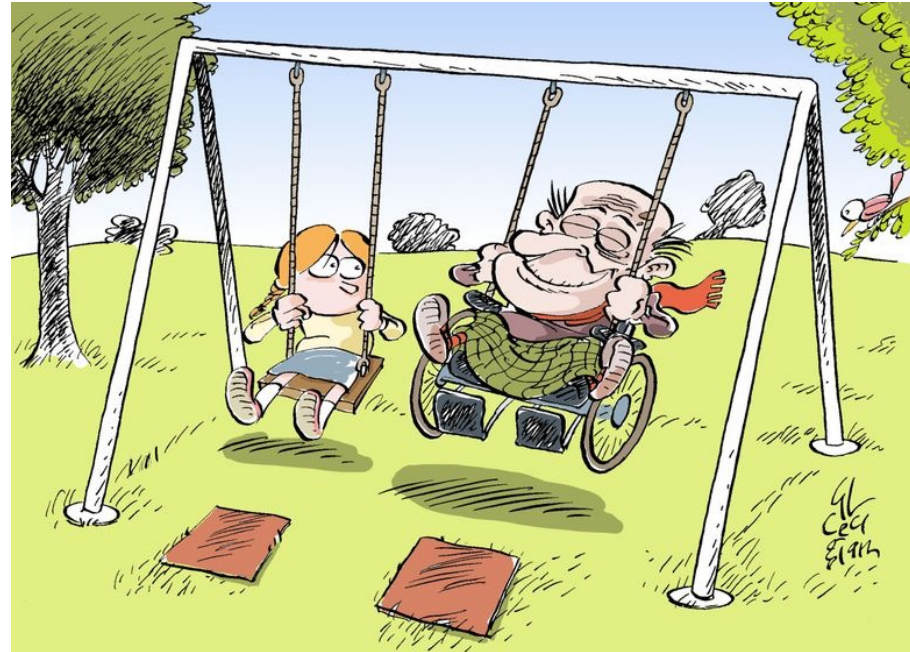


Healthy Aging & Your Brain



Nusha Askari, PhD

Stanford University School of Medicine, Department of Neurology
Stanford Alzheimer's Disease Research Center

Aging and Health

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- Aging well depends on your:
 - Genes
 - Environment
 - Lifestyle

- Today we will discuss lifestyle choices YOU can make to help maintain a healthy body and brain.

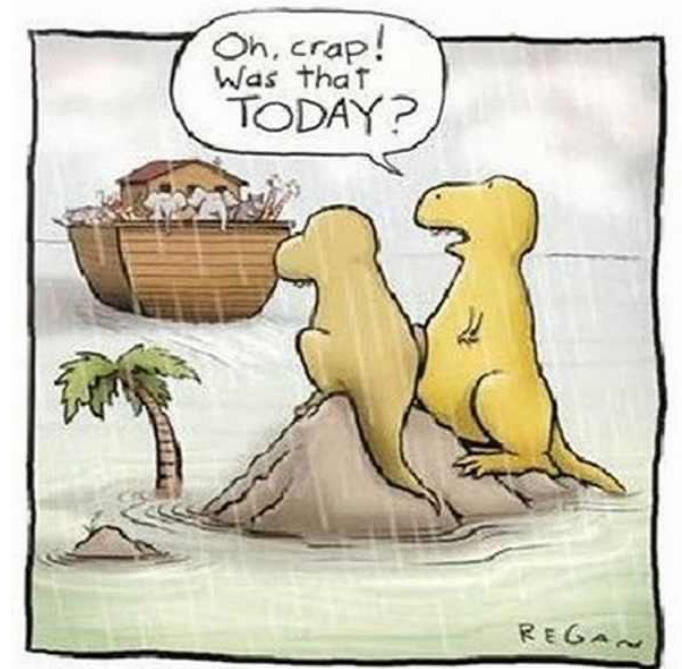
Age-Related Changes in Memory & Learning

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What are some changes we can expect as we grow older?

You may find:

- Increased difficulty finding words
- More problems multi-tasking
- Harder to focus & to pay attention



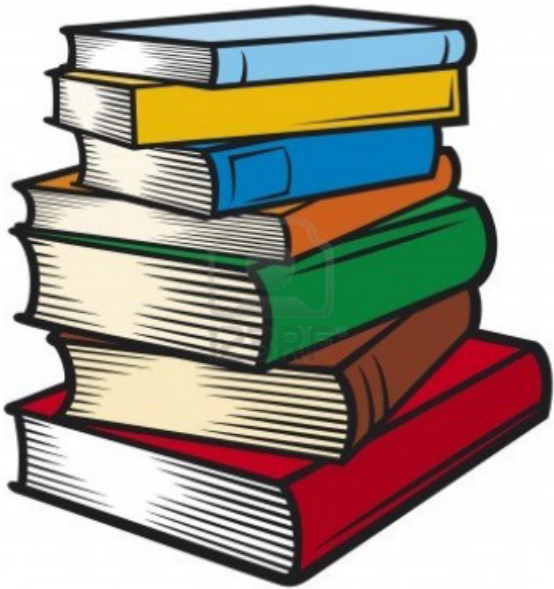
The first senior moment.

Age-Related Changes in Memory & Learning

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Despite these memory changes, **you can still:**

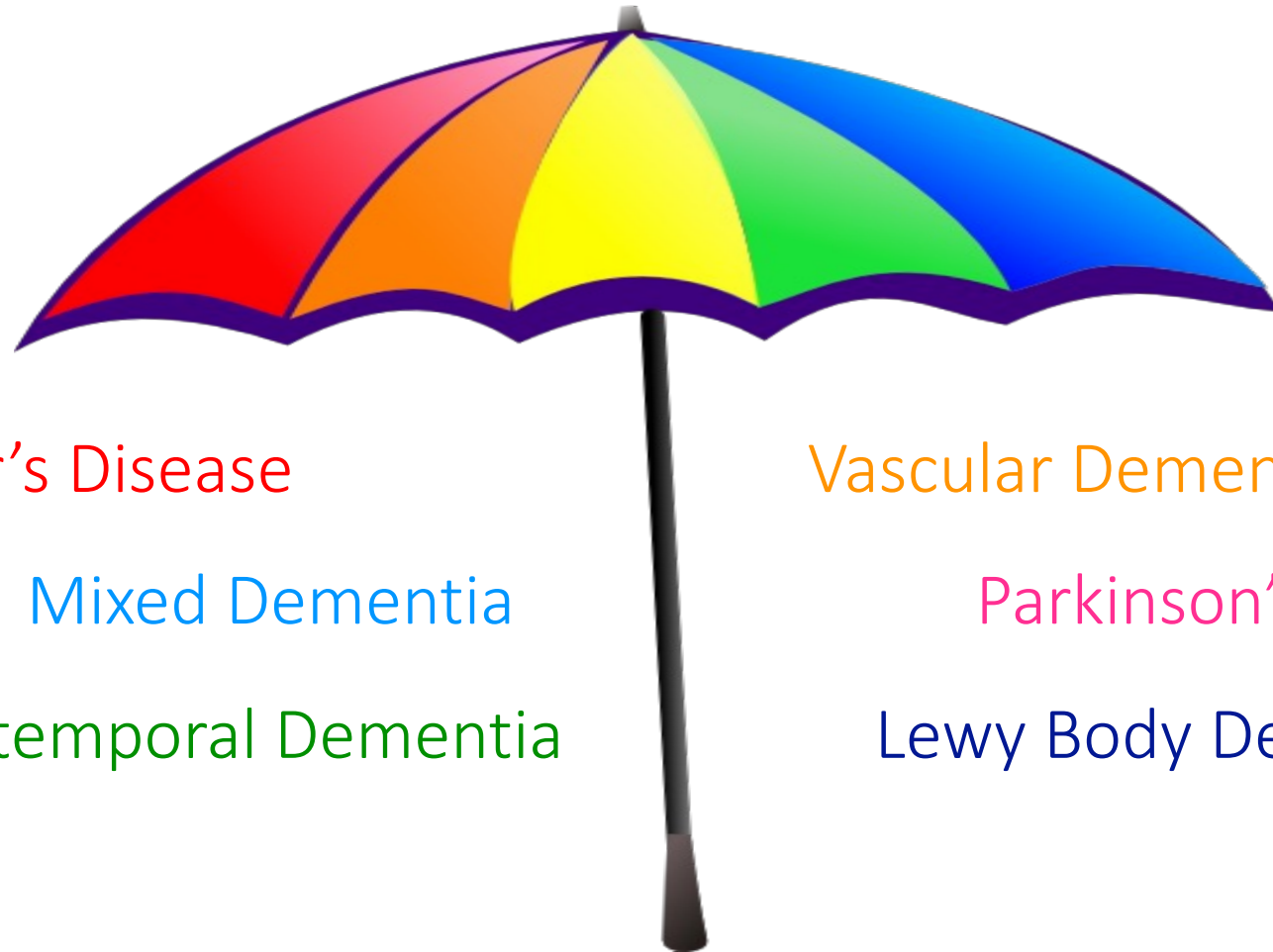
- **Learn new things**
- **Create new memories**
- **Improve vocabulary and language skills**



Dementia is NOT a normal age-related change

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Dementia is a general (umbrella) term.



Alzheimer's Disease

Vascular Dementia

Mixed Dementia

Parkinson's Disease

Frontotemporal Dementia

Lewy Body Dementia

Alzheimer's Disease

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➤ For more detailed information, go to www.alz.org

alzheimer's  association®
alz.org | 1.800.272.3900

- The national website of the Alzheimer's Association
- Continually updated with new information and resources
- Contains an informative “tour of the brain”

Alzheimer's Disease

➤ **Known non-modifiable risks for Alzheimer's Disease:**

- Age itself: the biggest risk factor! 1 in 3 persons age 85+ has some form of dementia
- Immediate family history of someone with AD
- Genes, in some people, especially early onset AD
 - Not a major risk for most people

Alzheimer's Disease

➤ **Modifiable risks for Alzheimer's Disease:**

- Heart disease and other insults to the cardiovascular system
- High blood pressure at mid-life that remains poorly controlled into old age
- Lack of physical & mental activity

Alzheimer's Disease in the Media

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How can you maintain a healthy brain?

First, we need to look at risks to your brain's health.

Possible Threats To Brain Health

- Some medicines, or improper use of them
- **Smoking** – it's bad for just about everything!
- Heart disease, diabetes, and other health problems
- Poor diet, too much alcohol
- Insufficient sleep
- Lack of physical activity
- Little social activity and isolation

Brain Injury from Falling

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- Older adults are at higher risk for falls and other accidents that can cause brain injury (TBI)
- Brain injury in older adults commonly results from falls
- **AVOID** brain injury from falling!
- *So, how can you reduce your fall risk?*

Reducing Frequency of Falls

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- **How can you reduce your risk?**
- Exercise to improve balance & coordination
- Take a fall prevention class
 - Stanford has a free program to assess risk in the home
- Make your home safer
- Review medicines and vision with your doctor
- Wear safety belts and helmets
- Get enough sleep!

Depression Affects Brain Function

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- Feelings of sadness or loss of interest in favorite activities that last for weeks at a time
- Problems with sleeping or eating too much or too little
- Feelings of loneliness, discouragement
- Negative attitude about the future
- Not a normal part of aging



Depression Affects Brain Function

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- Some medicines can cause depression
- Confusion or attention problems caused by depression can sometimes look like dementia
- Depression can be treated with appropriate medication and/or psychological counseling
 - **Cognitive/Behavioral Therapy (CBT)**

Sleep Apnea & Other Sleep Problems

- Short pauses in breathing while sleeping – not enough oxygen to the brain
- Can lead to injury, high blood pressure, stroke, or memory loss, all of which can affect brain health
- Treatment focuses on lifestyle changes
 - Avoiding alcohol
 - Losing weight
 - Devices ordered by your doctor (C-PAP)

What Can You Do? Taking preventative steps

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- 5 actions that are likely to help your brain health:
 - Take care of your physical health
 - Eat healthy foods (MIND diet)
 - Be active
 - Learn new things – USE your brain!
 - Socialize – stay connected with family, friends, and community
 - Each of these points will be discussed in more detail

Take Care Of Your Health

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- Get recommended health screenings annually
- Know your numbers!
 - Blood pressure
 - Cholesterol
 - Blood sugar
 - Any others unique to you!



Take Care Of Your Health

- Actively manage health problems like diabetes, high blood pressure, and high cholesterol
- Consult with your health care provider to make sure your medicines are right for you
- Reduce risk for brain injuries due to falls and other types of accidents
- Quit smoking!

Be Active... Get Moving!

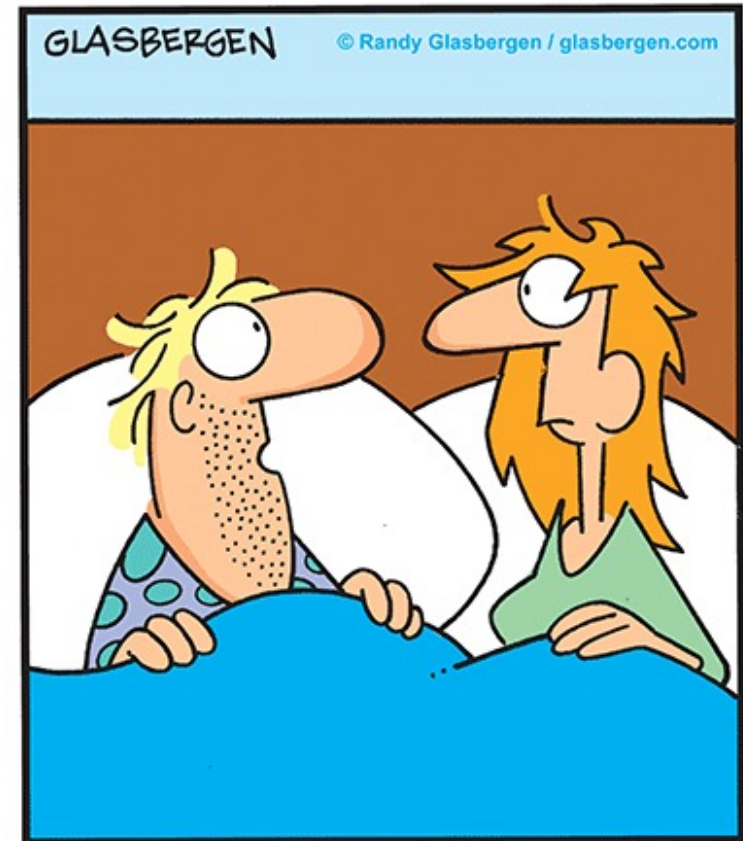
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- Physical activity may:
 - Reduce risks of diabetes, heart disease, depression, and stroke
 - Prevent falls
 - Stimulate blood flow in the brain
 - **Improve connections among brain cells!**

Be Active... Get Moving!

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- Get at least 150 mins of exercise each week
- Move about 30 minutes on most days
 - Walking is a good start – as long as you get your heart rate up!



“Every morning I think about going for a long walk. At least my brain is getting some exercise!”

Be Active... Get Moving!

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- Join programs that can help you learn to move safely
 - Many programs are offered at senior centers, the Y, etc.
- Also necessary:
 - **STRENGTH TRAINING, BALANCE TRAINING, and STRETCHING!**
- Check with your health care provider **FIRST** if you haven't been active and want to start an exercise program

The MIND Diet

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- Stands for “Mediterranean-DASH Intervention for Neurodegenerative Delay”



2015, March 23. New MIND diet may significantly lower risk of Alzheimer's Disease. *SciTech Daily*. Retrieved from <http://scitechdaily.com/new-mind-diet-may-significantly-lower-risk-of-alzheimers-disease/>

The MIND Diet – 10 Foods to Eat

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1. Green leafy vegetables: one salad daily
2. Other vegetables: one serving daily
3. Nuts: one serving daily
4. Berries: 2+ servings a week, blueberries & strawberries preferred
5. Beans: 3-4 servings per week
6. Whole grains: three servings daily
7. Fish: one or more servings per week
8. Poultry: at least two servings per week
9. Olive oil: This should be your primary oil
10. Wine or purple grape juice: one 5oz glass per day

The MIND Diet

5 Foods to Avoid

1. Red meats: eat rarely
2. Butter: eat no more than a tablespoon a day
Never eat margarine
3. Cheese: one serving or less per week
4. Pastries and sweets: Avoid all
5. Fried or fast food: Less than one serving per week

Keep Your Mind Active

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- Do mentally stimulating activities
- Read books and magazines
- Play games
- Learn new things
- Take or teach a class
- Be social through work or volunteering

Clinical trials have not proven that these types of activities will prevent Alzheimer's Disease, but they are fun & very likely to help us “maintain our brain”

Stay Connected

- People who do meaningful activities, like volunteering, say they feel happier and healthier.
- Social activities are linked to reduced risk for some health problems, including dementia.
- Join in social and other programs through your senior center or other community organizations.

Summary

- From an article by Frank Longo, MD, PhD, Chief of Stanford Department of Neurology & Co-director of ADRC – “Can we prevent or effectively treat Alzheimer’s disease?”



Summary

- After a thorough review of the literature, he concludes:
 - Studies continue to point to the powerful effects of **daily exercise**
 - Studies also show benefits of maintaining **appropriate weight**, consuming a **healthy diet**, and remaining **cognitively engaged with life**
 - **Most likely someone who does all of these will have the best outcomes!**

What Can You Do Today?

Pick one thing you can do to help your brain!

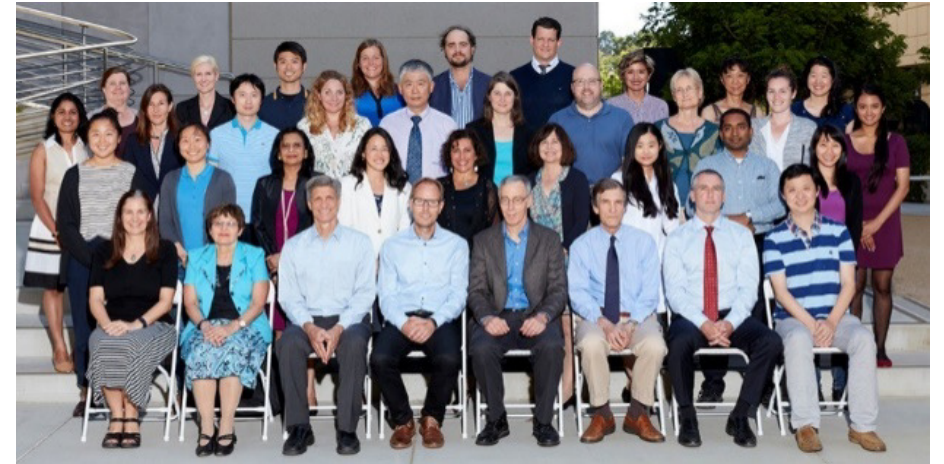
- Take small first steps! Examples:
 - Take a 10-minute walk a few times every day
 - Add 2 -4 servings of vegetables & fruits each day
 - Make an appt for health screenings or a physical exam
- Write down what you will do and when: make a commitment to do **all** that you can do
- Get support from family, friends, or community groups!

About Us

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The **Stanford Alzheimer's Disease Research Center (ADRC)** does research on different types of diseases that affect memory.

- The data we collect will help us learn how to prevent future generations from having these same problems.



About Us – The Stanford ADRC

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- We offer research opportunities for...
 - People with no or minor cognitive problems
 - People in the early stages of dementia
 - People with Parkinson's disease
 - People who are concerned about memory
- We have a particular interest in **Latino & American Indian families** who have been under-represented in dementia research for decades. We welcome everyone who is eligible.

Benefits to Participating in Stanford ADRC

- Availability of exercise and wellness classes (Yoga, Tai Chi, Dance, Qi Gong) at no cost.*
- Availability of support services (caregiver workshops, support groups, classes) at no cost.*
- Travel reimbursement, participation incentives, and feedback to share with your family and health care providers.

*In collaboration with the Stanford Neuroscience Supportive Care Program and Stanford Aging Adult Services

Thank You!

- Interested in learning more about or volunteering for our research?
 - Call our Clinical Nurse Coordinator,
 - Christina Wyss-Coray, at **(650) 721-2409**

Questions about this presentation?

Contact Dr. Nusha Askari at:

askarin@stanford.edu