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Quad Cities Professional

In The News



Chris Knack
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Brain research enters the new millennium

In our last article we discussed brain health and how to keep your mind fit, and today we extend that conversation with new and uplifting information.

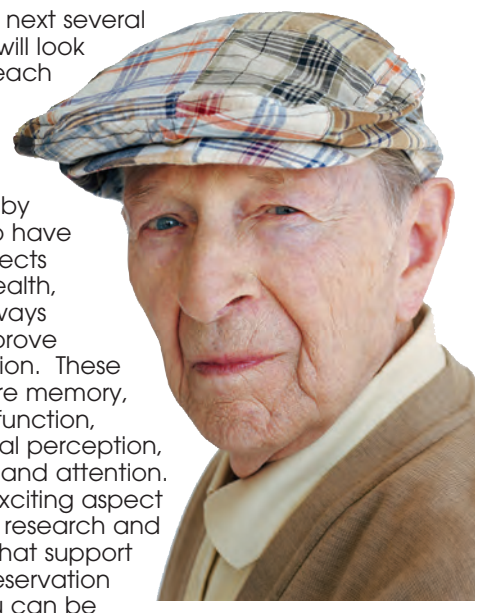
Up to this point there have been very limited treatment options for individuals diagnosed with Dementia. A few medications that work for a few months; some evidence that changing your lifestyle, with no significant information on how, can make a difference; and mostly anecdotal information about home remedies that helped a friend of a friend are all the options we have had - until now.

Exciting new research from UCLA, in conjunction with the Buck Institute, is changing everything. In a small study researchers were able, for the first time in history, to actually reverse the symptoms (yes, reverse) of dementia (AGING, September 2014, Vol. 6 No.9). This comes during a time where Alzheimer's is the third leading cause of death in the US, where a woman has a greater chance of being diagnosed with Alzheimer's than breast cancer, and where if nothing changes 160 million people will be diagnosed with some form of dementia by 2050 - a statistic that could bankrupt the Medicare system.

The good news for all of us is that this new research gives us all power to control our future to a much larger degree than ever suspected. There are several components of this new research that are directly in control of the individual. Comprehensive diet changes, brain stimulation, exercise, and sleep optimization, among other interventions have a direct impact on our neurocognitive health, and the most incredible aspect noted by researchers is that this isn't an all or nothing process - it appears to be cumulative. Because this is new research, there may not be as many agencies who incorporate this into their

care, so looking at companies that recommend healthy nutrition, physical and mental stimulation, and which focus on hope and a sense of purpose - a balanced care approach, will yield better results.

Over the next several weeks we will look closely at each of the 5 cognitive sub-domains suggested by research to have positive effects on brain health, and offer ways to help improve brain function. These domains are memory, executive function, visual-spatial perception, language, and attention. The most exciting aspect of this new research and programs that support it, is the preservation of self. You can be who you are, without fear of losing everything that is important to you - your memories, loved ones, independence, and at the core - your mind, which is and always will be your most valuable possession. What are you willing to do to protect that?



Chris Knack, MS, LAC, is the Director of Community Relations for Home Care Assistance, and current resident, volunteer, coach, and mentor in the Prescott and Prescott Valley area. If you would like more information please contact Chris at 928-771-0105. The original research article and others like it can be found at www.impactaging.com

Creating a safer home for seniors

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Some content supplied by Living Assistance Services @ VisitingAngels.com

Sometimes in our busyness we miss things that may not be an obstacle for us but could be for our elder loved ones. Some areas of our homes should be addressed to better suit the mobility limitations we can all experience as we age. So as we visit with family and friends this winter let's take a walk through the house and use these tips to create a safer home for our elders.

Begin by looking for ways to prevent falls. Falling injury is one of the highest causes of hospitalization in the elderly. Remove scatter rugs, or attach a nonskid backing. Place non-slip mats in the shower. Install grab bars in the bathtub and by the toilet. Use night lights in dark areas.

Next, look for fire safety concerns. It's common sense for all of us but easily neglected. Keep the stove area free from things that might catch fire. Remove newspapers from kitchen counters. Inspect electrical cords for fraying and place them away from walking paths. Install smoke detectors on every floor of the home. Keep space heaters away from flammable materials. Keep a fire extinguisher in the kitchen. Elders can be more sensitive to temperature. So set the hot water temperature to 115 degrees or below on the water heater and turn off heating pads before and older person goes to sleep.



Elders, just by virtue of the aging process tend to have multiple medications. It is easy to get medications confused and either over or under medicate one's self. Look for outdated medications and destroy ones that are no longer being used.

Finally, with in our wireless world, we sometimes forget the simple idea of making sure that there is a phone in an older person's bedroom with emergency numbers available.



Whether you visit an older person or have a senior living in your home, take time during this vacationing/visiting season to walk through the house with an eye toward safety. **Happy Holidays!**

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