

by Dakim

Checking for Signs of Dementia



One of the early signs of Alzheimer's could be found in a person's checkbook. A new study from the University of Alabama in Birmingham reveals that trouble balancing a bank account and difficulty with numbers could be signs that a person is developing dementia. Leader of the study, Professor Daniel Marson, warns that physicians and health-care providers need to "watch patients with MCI [Mild Cognitive Impairment] closely for declining financial skills and advise families and caregivers to take steps to avoid negative financial events."

Let's Pause for a Moment, Shall We?

Everyone needs to take a timeout once in a while. That's why Dakim has introduced a new "Pause" feature on Dakim BrainFitness. If a player needs to step away for a moment, he or she can press the green button on the right side of the system to pause the action. Once the pause button is activated, the player will be able to: adjust the volume, resume the game or quit the session. After three minutes, the game will resume automatically. It's just one of two new additions to BrainFitness. Players can also take advantage of the new "Goal-Keeping" feature. Players are invited to select the number of days a week they wish to commit to playing. Three to five days is recommended. Each session then concludes with a calendar to help track activity. This makes it easier than ever for users to stay consistent and motivated. And consistency is key to getting the most out of any brain training.



Does My Brain Make Me Look Fat?

The answer to why women often find it harder to lose weight than men may be found in their brains. This is according to a study done at the Brookhaven National Laboratory in the US Department of Energy. Researchers asked male and female volunteers to pick their favorite foods and then performed three separate PET scans on them. During one of the scans, subjects were stimulated with their favorite food but asked to suppress their desire for it. Both men and women reported feeling less hungry for the food at the time.



However, only the activity in the men's brains was actually reduced. As the lead author of the study explained, "Even though the women said they were less hungry when trying to inhibit their response to the food, their brains were still firing away in the regions that control the drive to eat." He goes on to speculate that this decreased inhibitory control in women "may also underlie women's lower success in losing weight while dieting when compared with men." So, to the ladies who always thought men lose weight easier than women – it may not be all in your head. But in your mind.

Visit our website for a demonstration.

We'd like to invite you to come over to our website and play. Go to www.dakim.com to see for yourself just how much fun working out your brain can be.

Already making a difference in the lives of seniors.

On the website, you'll also find our most up-to-date customer list. It includes some of the most respected senior care and housing communities in the United States. We're very proud to be their partners.



For Seniors. For Life.

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www.dakim.com

email: brainstorm@dakim.com

or write:

BrainStorm

2121 Cloverfield Blvd., Ste. 205
Santa Monica, CA 90404

Brain Storm™

by Dakim®
The Brain Fitness Solution

Number of People with Alzheimer's is Expected to Double Every 20 Years



The news couldn't be more dire. The need for prevention couldn't be more urgent. According to a study released on World Alzheimer's Day, by 2010, around 35.6 million people throughout the world will be living with dementia. The number is expected to increase to 65.7 million in 2030 and 115.4 million in 2050. Much of the increase will be due to longer life spans, especially in developing nations. Nevertheless, the number in North America alone is expected to increase 63% in the next 20 years. In fact, according to the National Institutes of Health, 1 in 7 Americans aged 71 and older is currently living with dementia.

The somewhat silver lining in this report is that while some of the causes appear to be genetically based, the majority appear to be preventable. According to the National Institutes of Health's Cognitive and Emotional Health Project, physical exercise not only helps keep the heart healthy, it also keeps the brain healthy. Mental stimulation has an impact as well. Andrew Carle, assistant professor in the Department of Health Administration and Policy at George Mason University, states "Our brains can be made stronger through exercise. In the same way physical exercise can delay many of the effects of aging on the body, there's some evidence cognitive exercise can at least delay the onset of Alzheimer's."

So, you don't have to just sit back and wait to become another statistic. More and more scientists are in agreement – there is something you can do right now. Take your mind into your own hands, and get a thorough mental workout each and every day.

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The Road to Brain Health is a Cakewalk

by Dan Michel
Founder and CEO of Dakim, Inc.

At Dakim, we often hear from senior living providers that residents sometimes seem to be more interested in what's for dessert than what's being done to keep their minds strong. Well, we recently heard an inspirational story about a young man who knew just how to turn cake into something much more healthy. James Lee, director of Lifestyle Programs at Brookdale Senior Living's community in Austin, Texas, is an advocate for the Brookdale culture of Optimum Life®. Its philosophy about intellectual pursuits is to create a balance for residents' lives and interests by offering a variety of events and activities in which residents voluntarily participate. James realized the maximum benefit from brain-stimulating activities comes when they are also fun, which is why the Dakim BrainFitness System™ at Brookdale sparked his interest. The challenging but entertaining "games" on the system were something he knew he could incorporate into the overall Lifestyle Program. But how do you get residents to voluntarily and enthusiastically participate?



The answer was a "Dakim Day" event at the community. Lee promoted it weeks in advance and promised it would be a fun social mixer complete with a cake and refreshments. He even decorated the lobby to make it extra festive. After a short presentation about the brain, he showed the residents a formatted 20-minute session. He then offered demonstrations on Dakim BrainFitness and took sign-ups right on the spot. The event was a huge success, and Lee now has a waiting list for his Dakim units.

After the "Dakim Day," residents created their own buzz about the program, and now it is self-promoting with virtually no extra effort required by the staff. It's amazing what a little party, a little cake, and a lot of caring can do.



Small Thoughts on Longevity

You probably recognize Dr. Gary Small from his recent PBS special, *Living Better Longer*. Or perhaps you've read his latest bestselling book, *iBrain: Surviving the Technological Alteration of the Modern Mind*. Gary Small, M.D., professor of psychiatry and biobehavioral sciences, is the director of the UCLA Center on Aging and Chief Scientific Advisor for Dakim.

Dr. Small took a few minutes from his busy schedule to talk with us about brain fitness:

Gray Power!

In my new book, I talk about the benefits that young people enjoy in this highly technological age. These Digital Natives have a brain "leg-up" when it comes to processing all things technological because they've never been without a computer, a video game or a cell phone. Whereas Digital Immigrants – whose brains were hard-wired back in the days of five TV channels and a typewriter, have to play technology catch-up, which presents a challenge, especially when it comes to life in the workplace. But the good news is that brain wiring can be re-fired with training.



Mature brains still flex. So, although Digital Immigrants tend to have fewer of the technology skills that seem second nature to Digital Natives, recent studies demonstrate that older brains do remain malleable and plastic throughout life. In fact, while it may take older people longer to process information, mature neural circuits are often more effective in seeing the big picture, which can be optimized to improve memory and learning. It just takes some training, patience and a "no fear" policy when it comes to dealing with new technology like a computer or an iPhone.

And in a case where age comes before beauty, baby boomers actually appear to have higher developed social skills than their younger counterparts, no doubt due to the fact that they grew up interacting with humans—not video monitors. So, when all is said and done, the mature person may actually have an advantage in both the real and in the corporate world.

Curry – The Spice of Life for the Brain?



Eating curry, which contains turmeric, once or twice a week could help prevent Alzheimer's disease. This is according to

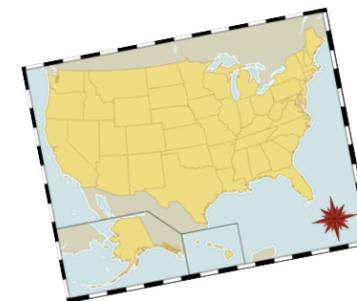
Professor Murali Doraiswamy, director of the Mental Fitness Laboratory at the Department of Psychiatry, Duke University Medical Center. During an annual meeting of the Royal College of Psychiatrists in Liverpool, he explained that brain plaques dissolved in older mice given high doses of curcumin (found in turmeric) and appeared to prevent plaques from ever forming in younger mice. He says trials are under way that could lead to a "curry" pill.

That being said, Dr. Susanne Sorensen, head of research at the Alzheimer's Society, said "Indian communities that regularly eat curcumin have a surprisingly low incidence of Alzheimer's disease, but we don't yet know why." The Alzheimer's Society is conducting their own research into this area.

While no one is advocating overdoing any food, studies have shown that curcumin is an antioxidant, so adding a little spice to your life certainly couldn't hurt. In fact, Dakim's own Chief Scientific Advisor, Dr. Gary Small, said that as he gets older, he might try eating more foods with curry in them.

States of Mind

How's the brain health of your state? Researchers recently released an index that purported to rank the "brain smarts" of all states and Washington D.C. Several factors were taken into consideration including diet, mental health, physical health and social well-being, with "diet" accounting for 36% of each state's score and with a heavy emphasis placed on the amount of DHA omega-3 fatty acids (like those found in fish) consumed. According to the study's author, Dr. Michael Rosen, "Our goal was to draw attention to the fact that your brain health isn't solely genetic – that you get to modify it."



The District of Columbia topped the chart thanks to its higher consumption of fish, fruits and vegetables. Not to mention the fact that they are a district of "readers."

The top 10 breaks down like this:

1. Washington D.C.
2. Maryland
3. Washington State
4. Vermont
5. Connecticut
6. Colorado
7. Massachusetts
8. New Jersey
9. Maine
10. New Hampshire



Power Aging with Jack LaLanne

Jack LaLanne is perhaps the most recognizable name in fitness throughout the world. We at Dakim are proud to welcome him as our newest advocate for brain fitness.

All my life I've been the guy that's encouraged, cajoled and pushed you to stay active and keep moving. So, what I'm about to say may seem a little strange coming from me, but here it goes – **GO TO SLEEP!**

It's good for your body and your brain. The experts say you need at least seven hours of sleep each night to literally turn off your brain so you can have optimal cognitive performance the next day. And the last five hours of sleep—the REM stage—are important. Because that's when your brain locks in information to improve memory function.

So, how do you get a good night's sleep? Some people turn to medication, but that can sometimes lead to memory impairment, not to mention other sideeffects. Experts and common sense tell me these are a few things you can do today to get a good night's sleep tonight:



- Exercise. At least 20-30 minutes a day. You knew I was going to say that. But try not to do too much for about two hours before bedtime.
- Don't fall asleep with the TV on. The light from the screen will disrupt your sleep. Honestly, there are far better things to do in the bedroom. But if you have to watch TV before you go to sleep, put it on a timer.
- Steer clear of caffeine and alcohol after noon. You might think alcohol will help you fall asleep faster, but what it also does is wake you up at night after its effects wear off.
- Keep a schedule. Go to bed and get up the same time each day. Even on weekends.
- Keep your room cool and dark and your bed nice and comfortable.
- If you have to eat close to bedtime, make sure it's a light snack only. Too much food and your body will be up digesting all night.
- If you have real trouble sleeping, try to avoid napping during the day. If you're a little tired, go for a brisk, invigorating walk instead.

Jack LaLanne