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June is Alzheimer's & Brain Awareness Month

Exercise for brain power!

by Angie Thompson, Director of Development

Regular physical exercise has numerous benefits for improving our health. It can lower blood pressure and reduce the risk of diabetes, heart disease, osteoporosis, and cancer. Exercise is also known to alleviate depression successfully. Did you know that study after study details how exercise can change the structure and function of your brain? Exercise creates new brain cells, thereby improving memory and cognitive skills.

Arthur Kramer, a professor of neuroscience at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, found a 15% improvement in memory and attention in older people who walked three days a week for six months.

Another study by Dr. Ahmed Salehi of Stanford University showed that young men performed significantly better on brain teaser tasks the second time after they exercised strenuously for thirty minutes than those who only rested between the tests. Blood samples revealed that the group that exercised had much higher levels of a protein known as brain-derived neurotrophic factor, or BDNF, which is known to promote the health of nerve cells. The men who rested showed no change in BDNF. "There appears to be a link between increased BDNF and exercise," says Dr. Salehi. "BDNF seems to be key in maintaining not just memory, but skilled task performance," such

as flying an airplane or driving a car.

Scientists in Scotland studied almost 700 people born in 1936.

They have found that brains in people with higher levels of physical activity are associated with less brain atrophy, or shrinkage, and less "brain damage than in people who are not physically active."

These and other findings show that exercise and brain health are related. Many scientists agree that exercise builds a brain that resists physical shrinkage and enhances cognitive flexibility. David Bucci, an associate professor of psychology and brain science at Dartmouth, states that ongoing research in his lab and others is "that exercise generally enhances the ability to remember."

There is no better gift you can give yourself and your loved ones than a commitment to improve your health and brain power. Always check with your physician before starting a new exercise program.

Exercise body in our After Care gym for a \$25 monthly fee, no contract required. Hours are Monday - Friday, between 8am - 5pm. Call Heather at (918) 766-0391 to learn more.



Alzheimer's Disease: Therapeutic Interventions

by Shelia Tucker, Associate DayBreak Director



A diagnosis of Alzheimer's can be stressful and distressing for everyone involved. Currently there is no cure, so support will be vital for the individual with

Alzheimer's as well as the caregiver. We at DayBreak Adult Day Health and Activity Center provide specialized daytime care for persons with Alzheimer's. Our activities are designed to help alleviate various Alzheimer's symptoms while improving the individual's quality of life.

Our participants engage in various activities for memory care, including word games, and puzzles to stimulate cognitive skills. We adjust our activities to meet the needs of the individual with the goal of increasing self-confidence while reducing any feelings of frustration.

To help improve a sense of wellbeing, reminiscing and reality orientation activities are an important part of our daily routine. Reminiscence therapy helps individuals recall cherished memories and positive experiences. This involves using props such as pictures, songs, and fragrances. Reality orientation provides cues and prompts about current date, time, season, and location.

DayBreak, participants are encouraged to take part in a variety of leisure activities, such as listening and singing along to music, being creative with arts and crafts, playing board games, bingo, cards, or dominoes. These activities reinforce known skills, and challenge the brain to learn new skills, stimulate social interactions, and give the opportunity for self-expression.

Participants can take part in physical activities which are led by a member of our trained staff. Engaging in regular exercise means more blood flow which helps the brain cells perform better, provide energy, strength, and sense of balance to the body. Regular physical activity may also help with the feeling of restlessness and disturbed sleep patterns that often accompany Alzheimer's.

Socialization is vital for a person's health and sense of wellbeing. It is common for those with Alzheimer's to withdraw from social activities. Avoiding contact with others accelerates the progression of the disease and increases the chances of developing anxiety and depression. Spending time at DayBreak gives the opportunity to maintain an active social life, meet new people and form new friendships.

At DayBreak our person-centered philosophy allows those living with a diagnosis of Alzheimer's to continue to enjoy life through

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meaningful activities and the opportunity to socialize in a welcoming, safe environment. For more information about DayBreak programs contact Shelia at 918-336-8500.

Ask the Professional

by Abby Petermann, M.S. CCC, SLP

Q: *I hear so much about dementia and am worried it is happening to me. What signs of cognitive decline should I look for and where would I go for help?*

A: Our cognitive processes will change as we get older, whether or not you have a dementia. Some common signs of typical aging include occasionally forgetting details, having a little more trouble focusing or processing information, and word finding trouble or occasionally losing your train of thought. Notably, these problems are annoying, but they don't really impact your ability to complete your daily tasks appropriately, and you are aware of them and can easily compensate for them. Signs that your troubles might go beyond typical aging processes include a lack of awareness or denial of your difficulties, and/or difficulties that are frequent and severe enough to impact your ability to do your daily tasks accurately and safely. Your primary care physician probably has a quick cognitive screener he/she can do at your next appointment, and you could also request a cognitive-linguistic assessment with a speech-language pathologist.

Hearing health linked to cognitive health

by Dr. Andrea Wagner, *Guest Contributor*



There is no getting around the fact that your hearing naturally declines as you age. This leads to potential communication challenges as many individuals with hearing loss are slow to have it diagnosed and treated. The

field of audiology continues to see that more and more research points to the urgency of proactively addressing hearing health to minimize the risk of cognitive decline. In fact, in a landmark publication, hearing impairment was determined to be the #1 modifiable risk factor for cognitive decline when identified and addressed in mid-life.

Increasing evidence has linked age-related hearing loss to more rapid progression of cognitive decline and incidental dementia. Research also shows long-term hearing deprivation can impact cognitive performance by decreasing the quality of communication leading to social isolation, depression, and facilitate dementia.

As more patients and families seek help to understand and manage cognitive aging, and as hearing issues are an important risk factor for cognitive impairment, it is a logical extension to include cognitive screening as part of overall testing protocol.

Typical cognitive screening is not an IQ test or list of questions, rather a simple, automated assessment

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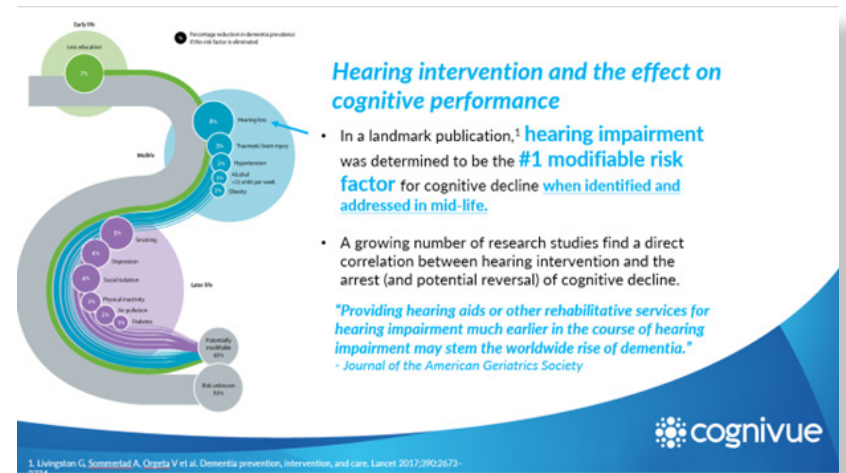
Hearing health – continued from Page 4

using an FDA-cleared technology (Cognivue Thrive). The results can help your Audiologist determine your cognitive health and how it relates to your hearing loss while ensuring your hearing correction solutions (often hearing aids) are right for you.

Cognivue Thrive evaluates three cognitive domains: memory, visuospatial and executive function and measures two speed performance parameters: reaction time and speed processing. These domains and parameters are key to overall performance at any age. The results of the Cognivue Thrive screening aid in providing a comprehensive management strategy for hearing loss.

The good news is that at Advanced Hearing Care in Bartlesville you can have a full hearing evaluation that includes the cognitive screening discussed above to address hearing loss or to establish a baseline examination.

Dr. Wagner is owner of Advanced Hearing Care Specialists in Bartlesville. Elder Care does not directly or indirectly endorse any product or service associated with Dr. Wagner or Dr. Wagner and Advanced Hearing Care Specialists. The information provided in this article is for educational purposes and limited in scope. Dr. Wagner did not receive any goods or services in exchange for providing this educational piece. Please consult your primary care physician or audiologist to discuss your cognitive, physical, and hearing health.



26th Annual fundraiser a success

by Angie Thompson, Director of Development

Elder Care's 26th anniversary fundraising event was a success! 650 guests joined us for a night of live music, dancing, and live and silent auctions. All under a beautiful Oklahoma sky to raise funds for the many programs at Elder Care.

We appreciate all who supported the event with their time and financial resources.

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26th Annual fundraiser a success - continued

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Board Highlight

by Michael Thompson

Stephen Colaw brings a heritage of altruism and well-rounded community service to Elder Care's board. Ever since his family came to Bartlesville in 1959, their legacy has been one of compassion and support for our organization. Following in his father, Reverend C.B. Colaw's, footsteps, Stephen remains the only second-generation board member at Elder Care.



Stephen Colaw
Elder Care board member

After graduating from the University of Missouri – Kansas City with a degree in psychology and counseling, Stephen returned to Bartlesville in 1980 and worked as a trust officer at Arvest Bank for 34 years until his retirement in 2017. Since he established himself in the community, he continues serving on boards in numerous organizations including the Green Country Free Clinic, Bluestem Medical Foundation, and Green Country Village.

Stephen chose to be on Elder Care's board because of his father and for our organization's insight of working with Bartlesville's senior citizens. For Stephen, the results Elder Care provides are the reason he encourages others to financially support the mission.

“Donors are making it possible for others to receive care they would not otherwise receive,” Stephen said, “If you want to share in the benefits of our community, then you need to support our community so they will survive.”

Learn more about programs available to adults 60 and older by calling (918) 336-8500 or visiting our website: AboutElderCare.org.

This Month's Donors

In appreciation of contributions to Elder Care in May 2024

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In honor of Kay Reynolds

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Gail Richardson	Dr. Andrea Wagner
Dr. Jason King, MD	Wash. Co. Master
Abby Petermann	Gardeners

We sincerely apologize for any unintended error or omission. Due to publication deadlines, acknowledgment of gifts may take up to 60 days in Prime Times Publication. If you feel there is an error, please call Angie Thompson at (918) 336-8500.

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