

Prevention of Alzheimer's – What Can I Do?

I've read some pretty discouraging reviews on Alzheimers Disease lately. Some experts are claiming that there's not much you can do to prevent it.

They say that exercise, diet, weight loss, Ginkgo Biloba, B vitamins and antioxidants have not been proven to be effective in decreasing the risk or slowing the onset of Alzheimers Disease and other forms of dementia.

That's pretty grim news for those of us who like to be proactive when it comes to protecting our health & well being. It almost makes you say "Why bother?".

But, the problem is that the studies that those experts are referring to were looking at one variable at a time. Some of those studies show benefits, but others don't. So it all seems pretty murky.

But what if you tried a more holistic approach? What if you looked at more than one variable at a time?

Well a group headed by Dr. Nikolaos Scarmeas did just that (JAMA, 302: 627-637, 2009). They looked at the effect of both diet and exercise on the risk of developing Alzheimers.

They enrolled 1880 elderly subjects from Northern Manhattan with an average age of 77 in their study. All of the subjects were healthy and free of dementia at the start of the study.

They found that those subjects who most closely followed a Mediterranean diet were 40% less likely to develop Alzheimers over the next five and a half years than the subjects who were consuming a typical American diet.

And those subjects who were physically very active were 33% less likely to develop Alzheimers than the couch potatoes.

But those subjects who closely followed the Mediterranean diet and were physically active were a whopping 60% less likely to develop Alzheimers than the junk food eating couch potatoes.

In a smaller study the effect of diet alone or exercise alone might not have been large enough to approach statistical significance - which explains the ambiguous results obtained from many of those studies that have focused on only one variable at a time.

But, the effect of combining both diet and exercise is of obvious benefit.

So, if you'd like to prevent Alzheimers and other dementias as you age, my best advice would be to double up - follow a good diet and get plenty of exercise.

But why stop there? Why not try adding Ginkgo Biloba, B vitamins and antioxidant supplements for a triple play?

What the heck - Why not just pile on and aim for ideal body weight as well?

There is some evidence that each of those approaches reduces the risk of Alzheimers.

The evidence may not be good enough to recommend any one of them by itself, but they should all be considered as part of a holistic approach to reducing the risk of developing Alzheimers and other age-related dementias.

To Your Health!

Dr. Stephen G Chaney

Dr. Stephen Chaney

Shaklee Master Coordinator

<http://www.socialmarketingconnection.com>

888.860.2075

P.S. The "Heart Health" CD that my son and I recently recorded is now available for order at:

www.socialmarketingconnection.com

Dr. Stephen Chaney

<http://www.socialmarketingconnection.com>

These statements have not been evaluated by the Food and Drug Administration. This information is not intended to diagnose, treat, cure or prevent any disease.