More Proof – Lifestyle Really Matters to Long-Term Dementia Risk

What: A recent study looked at the relationship of numerous lifestyle factors to later dementia risk. Researchers, using data from the Framingham Heart Study Offspring Cohort, considered the impact certain experiences or choices at middle age may have on dementia later in life. They found that those middle-aged individuals who were widowed, had a lower body mass index or did not get adequate sleep were at significantly greater risk for dementia in later life.

Why This Matters: Dementia takes a tremendous toll on the affected individual, their family, and society. While little progress has been made in developing effective treatments for dementia, we continue to gain knowledge about what we can all do to reduce our dementia risk. This well-designed study, using a large sample pool, adds to the growing list of lifestyle interventions that should be promoted by public agencies and the medical community as an effective means of lowering one’s risk for memory disorders.

The Takeaway: This study underscores other recent findings, such as the Lancet Commission Study, that have shown the tremendous importance of leading brain healthy lifestyles to promote long-term cognitive vitality. It also demonstrates the impact of choices made in mid-life on cognitive outcome in our later years, suggesting that it is indeed never too early to start living with our brains in mind.

Dehydration in Older Adults

Dehydration occurs when the body loses too much fluid. This can happen when you stop drinking water or lose large amounts of fluid through diarrhea, vomiting, sweating or exercise.

Not drinking enough fluids can cause muscle cramps. You may feel faint. Usually, the body can reabsorb fluid from the blood and other body tissues. But by the time a person becomes severely dehydrated, they no longer have enough fluid in their body to get blood to the organs and may go into shock, which is a life-threatening condition.

An older person may also be more likely to get a urinary tract infection (UTI) if they do not drink enough fluids, or if they have diabetes. Monitor older adults closely for the early symptoms of dehydration any time they have illnesses that cause high fever, vomiting or diarrhea.

The early symptoms of dehydration can include:

- A dry mouth and sticky saliva
- Reduced urine output with dark yellow urine
- Acting listless or easily irritated

Older adults have an increased chance of becoming dehydrated because they may:

- Not drink because they do not feel thirsty
- Have kidneys that do not work well
- Choose not to drink because of the inability to control their bladders
- Have physical problems or a disease that makes it hard to drink or hold a glass
- Find it painful to get up from a chair
- Consider it difficult to talk or communicate to someone about their symptoms
- Take medication that increases urine output

Dehydration can occur in anyone of any age, but is most dangerous for babies, small children and older adults.

The Dementia Caregiver’s Little Book of Hope, Karen Karle Truman, PhD
Memory Disorder Clinic  
Free Educational Classes

**Stress-Busting Program for Family Caregivers**
Do you provide care for a loved one with Alzheimer’s disease or dementia? The Stress-Busting Program is a 9-week series, and it will begin Tuesday, January 15, 2019, from 10 a.m. to noon.

The program is designed to provide caregivers with the tools and strategies to better improve upon their own self-care and to learn effective ways to manage stress related to caregiving. Sue Cosker with the Memory Disorder Clinic and Robin Fatovic, one of the Florida Tech doctoral students, will be co-facilitating the series. The class is held at the Memory Disorder Clinic in the Aging Services building.

**MindSet**
The MindSet class is designed for individuals with mild cognitive impairment. During the 6-week series, individuals practice specific brain exercises, create healthy habits and improve communication. The series will begin on Thursday, March 7, 2019, from 1:30 to 3 p.m. Sandy Stauffer with the Memory Disorder Clinic along with Robin Fatovic, Florida Tech doctoral student, will be co-facilitating the series.

Care partner participation, such as a family member or friend, is highly recommended. The class is held at the Center for Family Caregivers.

**TOTAL BRAIN HEALTH® BRAIN WORKOUT CLASSES**
Please join us as we “work out” our brains. You are invited to this special hands-on, engaging course on brain wellness. We will meet for a series of four classes to discuss valuable cognitive interventions that can help support our daily thinking skills. Come and enjoy:

- Hands-on activities that focus on physical, mental and emotional health
- Strategies that help maintain our intellectual skills
- No-pressure challenges for intellectual engagement

Classes held on Wednesday, February 6, 13, 20, and 27, 2019, from 2:30 to 3:30 p.m. at the Freedom 7 Senior Center in Cocoa Beach. Sandy Stauffer with the Memory Disorder Clinic will be the facilitator.

For information and to register, call Sue Cosker at 321.434.7614

---

**Announcing Memory Screens at Sunflower House**
Are you concerned about your memory or the memory of a loved one? Providing screenings at two locations. Call today to sign up for a free 30-minute memory screening.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Phone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>East Central Florida Memory Disorder Clinic</td>
<td>3661 S. Babcock St. Melbourne, FL 32091</td>
<td>321.434.7612</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunflower House</td>
<td>777 E. Merritt Island Causeway Merritt Island, FL 32952</td>
<td>321.434.7614</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>