

Sanders-Brown Research Volunteer Newsletter



Sanders-Brown
Center on Aging
University of Kentucky
Alzheimer's Disease Center

Volume 3, Issue 1
January 1, 2008

Get ready for our next Town-Hall Meeting ! Mon, February 25 at 2:00 pm

Update on Genetics and Familial Risk for Alzheimer's

At our last town-hall meeting, we discussed the potential health benefits of DHA (an omega-3-fatty acid found in fish oil) and resveratrol (a chemical found in grape skins responsible for the health benefits of red wines). Both DHA and resveratrol are being actively investigated by our center as part of a global effort to find better treatments or possible cures for Alzheimer's disease.

Just 2-3 servings of fish (salmon, tuna, and other meaty fish are best) a week may be one of the best sources of natural antioxidants and protection against Alzheimer's that we have found to date. In addition to keeping brain cells healthy, DHA may also act directly by lowering toxic amyloid levels that are one of the hallmarks of Alzheimer's disease. Population studies have suggested that this simple practice may reduce your risk of developing Alzheimer's disease by two-thirds!

And while you're feasting on that delicious salmon steak, why not wash it down with a glass of red grape juice or wine. Resveratrol has been shown to extend the lifespan of yeast, worms, fish, and mice by nearly 50%. Like DHA, resveratrol is a powerful antioxidant and may also directly prevent the buildup of neurofibrillary tangles that destroy brain cells in Alzheimer's disease. While red wine may be the best source of resveratrol (because it is fermented from whole grapes, including the skin which is highest in resveratrol), white wines, grape juice and raw grapes may also confer these health benefits. (cont. on pg 4)



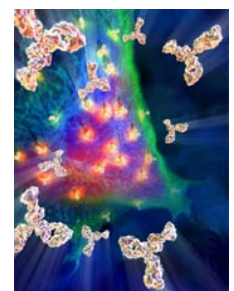
Please take note of our new location at the County Extension office, 1140 Red Mile PI, Lexington



Two new clinical trials are investigating passive immunization as a potential cure for Alzheimer's disease

Researchers and other healthcare professionals all agree that the best way to cure Alzheimer's disease is to stop it before it starts. Sound like the "impossible dream?" Not really! Small pox, polio, measles, mumps, and rubella have all been defeated by vaccination and immunization strategies, preventing disease before it can even begin. Scientists believe that we may be able to do the same for Alzheimer's disease!

Many don't realize it, but the dream to develop a vaccine to treat, cure, or even prevent Alzheimer's disease is well underway. One such vaccine has already been tested, and the evidence suggests that it may have worked. Unfortunately, the vaccine caused a fatal brain inflammation in 13 persons (6%) and the trial was stopped. Despite this setback, the vaccine appeared to stop memory and thinking decline in many who received the vaccine. Those that have passed away from natural causes show a dramatic decrease in amyloid plaques (the hallmark of Alzheimer's disease) in their brains, suggesting that the vaccine may not only stop the disease, but actually reverse some of the pathological (cont. on pg 3)





LEARNING TO PLAY THE SAXOPHONE AT 82



By a BRAiNS participant



We've all heard the saying, "You can't teach an old dog new tricks!" Well, I never believed it, but I am soon going to find out if it is true or not!

Here's how it started. My wife learned somewhere about New Horizons Music, a national program, which was starting up in Lexington. Its pitch was "learn to play music in a band or orchestra as a senior adult even if you have no musical experience." I'll say more about it later.

My wife said, "I'd like to take up the oboe again, how about you?" Now I'm remembering the "Big Band Days" and Glenn Miller's "Chattanooga Choo Choo" with Tex Beneke on sax.

"Well, we've already got your old saxophone" I said, "Maybe I could give it a try." I had done a lot of singing, and I play some acoustic guitar, but I have never played a band instrument or been in a band.

So in late September, I, at 82, with my sax and my wife, much younger, with her oboe trudged off to the first meeting of the New Horizons Band of Lexington under the direction of Christine Carucci, an experienced band director and doctoral student in music education under Professor David Sogin at

the University of Kentucky. The band meets every Saturday from 10 a.m. to noon at Mayfair Manor on Tates Creek Road.

"The New Horizons Band of Lexington is the only one in Kentucky. It is for adults over 50 years old" Christine said. The program is designed for those who want to re-learn an instrument or learn a new one.

According to its brochure, Roy Ernst at the Eastman School of Music started New Horizons Music in 1991. It has been widely publicized in newspapers and on television. Today there are more than 100 New Horizon Music Programs in the U.S. and Canada.

Christine said that the New Horizons Band of Lexington would have fall and spring semesters on a regular and permanent basis. Instrument rental and purchase plans are available to students.

"This activity is very beneficial to older adults for both health and social reasons. Playing music is physically and mentally stimulating. Plus, you meet new people and have a lot of fun," Christine said.

Director Christine, a bassoonist, is capably assisted by her husband, Joe, a saxophonist. Joe is a doctoral student in music performance under Professor Miles Osland at the University of Kentucky.

Christine and Joe, who are way too young to be members, are wonderful instructors and possess the great skill and patience necessary to direct musical "kindergarten" full of senior citizens.

The New Horizons Band of Lexington is looking for more members. If you are interested, contact Christine Carucci at 859-533-6083 or by e-mail at christine.carucci@uky.edu.

I, for one, highly recommend it!



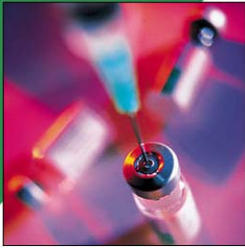
Do you have a story, comment, or anecdote to share?

The Sanders-Brown Research Volunteer Newsletter can be your voice!

Please send any thoughts or comments to

Dr. Greg Jicha at gajich2@email.uky.edu or mail to

223 Sanders-Brown Bldg, 800 South Limestone, Lexington, KY 40536



Immunizing against Alzheimer's disease *(cont. from page 1)*

changes of Alzheimer's disease. Over the past several years, researchers across the globe have been back at the drawing board, trying to develop a safer way to immunize individuals against this devastating disease.

Two upcoming national clinical trials are using intravenous infusions of antibodies against Alzheimer's disease proteins rather than the typical "shot-in-the-arm" vaccine approach we are most familiar with. Researchers hope that this will allow them to better control the immune response and prevent the development of harmful side effects we witnessed in the first vaccine trial. This same approach has been used for years to treat and cure rabies.

The University of Kentucky has gained approval to participate in these pivotal studies, and we are currently evaluating the risks and benefits of these treatments in conjunction with the human safety officials at UK. If approved, we hope to start enrolling subjects early in 2008. Participation in these studies will be limited to persons in the mild-moderate stages of Alzheimer's disease without other significant health problems. For more information on these or other studies investigating new treatments or possible cures for Alzheimer's disease, please call Sarah at (859) 257-1412 x289.

Exercise your Mind! Brainteasers to test your skills...

Read these carefully and think hard before you answer!

Questions:

- 1) Some months have 31 days. How many have 28?
- 2) In baseball, how many outs are there in an inning?
- 3) Is it legal for a man in California to marry his widow's sister?
- 4) Divide 30 by $1/2$ and add 10. What is the answer?
- 5) If there are 3 apples and you take away 2 how many do you have?
- 6) A Doctor gives you 3 pills telling you to take one every half hour. How many minutes would they last?
- 7) A farmer has 17 sheep and all but 9 die. How many are left?
- 8) How many animals of each species did Moses take on the ark?
- 9) How many two-cent stamps are there in a dozen?
- 10) What was the President's name in 1961?

To find out if you were right, see the answers on page 4



Just-for-Fun! Totally useless trivia



- Orchids have the smallest seeds. It takes more than 1.25 million seeds to weigh one gram!
- If every OREO cookie ever made were stacked on top of each other (over 362 billion), the pile would reach the moon and back more than five times. If placed side-by-side they would encircle the earth 381 times at the equator!
- The word "tip", meaning a gratuity, was originally an acronym standing for "To Insure Promptness"!
- The Statue of Liberty's mouth is 3 feet wide. The statue weighs 450,000 pounds, or 225 tons. The copper sheeting weighs 200,000 pounds. There are 167 steps from the land level to the top of the pedestal, 168 steps inside the statue to the head, and 54 rungs on the ladder leading to the arm that holds the torch!
- Plants in the mint family have been used for centuries as anti-spasmodic. Current studies suggest that ingesting peppermint oil (available in capsule form) helps relieve internal gas and bloating!

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Exercise your mind: answers *(cont. from page 3)*

1) All of them, 2) 6 - three per side, 3) No, because in order for her to be a widow, he must be dead, 4) 70. 30 divided IN half is 15 but 30 divided by $\frac{1}{2}$ is 60., 5) 2 - remember it was YOU who took them, 6) 60 minutes. Start with the first pill. 30 minutes later the 2nd then 30 minutes later the third. Total minutes = 60, 7) 9. Remember all BUT 9 died, 8) Moses took none - it was Noah, 9) 12. No matter what it's made up of a dozen is a dozen, 10) Same as it is today George W. Bush. Remember it did not ask WHO was president, but rather what the president's name was in 1961.



Town-Hall Meeting on Genetics and Family Risks in Alzheimer's disease *(cont. from page 1)*

If you choose to get your resveratrol from wine, remember the old saying “all things in moderation!” Consuming more than one glass of wine/day may dramatically increase your risk of developing Alzheimer's disease and contribute to a whole host of health problems including heart attack and stroke!

The topics we cover at our town-hall meetings focus on issues of recurrent interest that we are asked about at your annual visits. After a brief presentation on the selected topic, we open the floor for discussion. Any topic is fair game here, and our experts are ready, able, and willing to expand the discussion to any issues that may be important to you personally. Chances are, if you have wondered about it, others have too! This open participation is what makes these meetings so informative and so much fun!

Our upcoming meeting will focus on the genetic contributions to Alzheimer's disease. Many of you have family members who have suffered from Alzheimer's disease and frequently ask about your risk for developing this ravaging disease. There is a great deal of misinformation in the popular press regarding genetics and familial risk associated with Alzheimer's disease. While “true” (Mendelian) genetically-inherited Alzheimer's disease is relatively rare, genetic and familial risk is quite common. Our discoveries in this area are unlocking the mysteries of Alzheimer's disease, bringing us ever closer to a cure!

Please join us for light refreshments, lots of information, and a lively discussion, Monday, February 25 at 2:00 pm, Fayette County Extension Office. This is a new location for these meetings, so please take note. For more information or directions, call Kay at (859) 323-5550. Family members and friends are always welcome. See you there!