

Healthy Living

An Active Mind is a Healthy Mind

Can people think their way to better brain health? A mounting body of scientific literature suggests they can.

According to a study by Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine in Cleveland, older adults with healthier brains tended to be more mentally and physically active than their peers between the ages of 40 and 60. "A relative increase in the amount of time devoted to intellectual activities from early adulthood (ages 20 to 39) to mid-adulthood (ages 40 to 60) was associated with a significant decrease in the probability of

having Alzheimer's disease later in life," says Dr. Robert Friedland, the study's leader.

While previous research has suggested that a higher educational level lowers the risk of Alzheimer's disease, the Case Western study shows that it's never too late to start building intellectual muscle. Stimulating hobbies pay off regardless of the age they are started.

"Read, read, read," advises Dr. Amir Soas, a co-investigator in the Cleveland study. "Do crossword puzzles. Pull out the chessboard or Scrabble. Learn a foreign language or a new hobby."



In short: Do anything that engages your mind and body. And turn off that TV! "When you watch television," says Dr. Soas, "your brain goes into neutral."

Your Legacy to the Future

One of the most impactful ways you can advance the fight against Alzheimer's disease is to leave a bequest in your will to Alzheimer's Disease Research. Whether your gift comes in the form of stocks or bonds, securities, real estate or gifts of cash, it can have a profound impact on the life-giving research work of Alzheimer's Disease Research. For additional information or if you want to discuss the many options available, please call Gayle Handiboe, Development Manager, at 1-800-437-2423 or e-mail her at gandiboe@ahaf.org.

Thank you for thinking of Alzheimer's Disease Research!

ALZHEIMER'S RESEARCH REVIEW

A publication for friends and donors of Alzheimer's Disease Research

Summer 2007

Two Researchers to Receive ADR's Coveted Centennial Awards

\$1 Million Grants Will Help Scientists Study Gene Links, Protein Buildup

Two of the nation's most innovative multi-disciplinary researchers have each been given \$1 million Centennial Awards by Alzheimer's Disease Research.

Dr. Bradley T. Hyman, the John B. Penney Jr. Professor of Neurology at Harvard Medical School and Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston, will use his grant to analyze a gene associated with Alzheimer's disease susceptibility. By studying the protein product of this gene, Hyman and his team hope to identify targets for future medicines.

Dr. Donald F. Weaver, Professor and Canada Research Chair in Clinical Neuroscience at Dalhousie University in Halifax, Nova Scotia, will use his grant to find ways of disrupting the protein buildup that damages the brains of Alzheimer's disease patients. Weaver and his team hope to discover new and useful

drug treatments for Alzheimer's disease.

Hyman and Weaver were chosen through a competitive peer review process.

The Alzheimer's Disease Research grants are called Centennial Awards in recognition of the 100 years that have passed since Dr. Alois Alzheimer first described the disease. The awards are designed to foster research that

will slow or reverse, and ultimately prevent, this devastating brain disorder.

"We are extremely pleased to give these awards to such committed scientists, who will move us closer to understanding and treating this terrible disease," said Dr. Brian Regan, president of Alzheimer's Disease Research. "We remain dedicated to continued investment in Alzheimer's disease research worldwide."

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For more information on projects being funded by Alzheimer's Disease Research, visit us on the web at: www.ahaf.org



President's Corner

Short-Term Gains, Long-Term Victory

At Alzheimer's Disease Research, we know that miracles don't happen overnight. They are the product of years and years of careful and patient experimentation.

At the same time, we cherish the individual advances that take us closer and closer to our ultimate goal of curing this disease — especially when our grants help make it possible.

You'll read about some of those exciting developments in this issue of **Alzheimer's Research Review**. One researcher is homing in on the gene that makes people susceptible to the disease; another is working to find new ways of disrupting the buildup of brain plaque. Still another team of researchers is mapping the pathway from brain injury to Alzheimer's disease.

Success stories like these make us forever grateful to the donors who have allowed us to disseminate more than \$55 million in grants since our inception. Working together, we *can* win. Working together, we *can* beat this terrible disease.



Brian K. Regan, Ph.D.
President

www.ahaf.org

Simply click on the Alzheimer's Disease Research link to learn more about what's new in the world of research, as well as important information about risk factors for Alzheimer's disease.

Please share this newsletter with someone you know who might be interested in learning about some of the latest advancements in research to prevent, treat and cure Alzheimer's disease.

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Alzheimer's Disease Research Supported Team Maps Links Between Head Injuries and Alzheimer's Disease

Findings Could Help Lower Risk of Alzheimer's in Stroke Patients

The death of brain cells from stroke and head injury seems to trigger the development of amyloid-beta protein, a key factor in Alzheimer's disease, according to a new report from the MassGeneral Institute for Neurodegenerative Disorders.

Scientists have known for some time that strokes and head injuries heighten people's chances of developing Alzheimer's disease. By mapping the underlying biochemical mechanisms, however, the Institute's researchers, with the help of a grant from Alzheimer's Disease Research, have for the first time answered the question: Why?



In a series of experiments, the MassGeneral researchers unraveled the process by which



strokes and other brain injuries create a vicious cycle of cell death and amyloid-beta production. Amyloid-beta is toxic to brain cells and is a key component in the brain plaque found in people with Alzheimer's disease.

Giuseppina Tesco, M.D., Ph.D., of the Institute's Genetics and Aging Research Unit, says her group's findings "raise the prospect of novel therapies that could interfere with this process and reduce the risk of Alzheimer's disease in stroke or head trauma patients."

Rudolph Tanzi, Ph.D., director of the research unit, adds: "Our findings shed new light on how the aged brain becomes more vulnerable to Alzheimer's disease, since any insult to the brain — head injury, stroke or mini-strokes — can set off this

process. Therapies that [block the chain of reactions] might be able to reduce the risk of Alzheimer's or the more transient type of dementia that can occur after such injuries."

Alzheimer's Disease Research has provided \$xx,xxx in grants for the Institute's research.

