



**motion picture
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fund**

SOCIAL SERVICES CORNER

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ALZHEIMER'S RESEARCH: WHAT WE KNOW AND WHAT WE ARE LEARNING

Question: I recently determined that I may be at risk for Alzheimer's disease. Is there anything I can do to prevent or forestall it?

Answer: According to the Alzheimer's Association, 95 percent of what we know about Alzheimer's we've learned in the last 15 years, and research continues to yield new findings. One such finding is that there are genetic risks for Alzheimer's, but these risks alone do not predict who will get the disease. Research shows that Alzheimer's is best understood as a combination of risk factors, including:

Heart health: The heart pumps blood to the brain. If your circulatory system cannot send enough blood to the brain, the brain does not get sufficient oxygen and nutrients required for optimal functioning.

Head trauma: A history of severe or repeated head injury is a contributing factor, so stay safe. Bike with a helmet. Wear your seat belt.

Smoking: Smoking has a dramatic impact on your vascular health, affecting the millions of tiny capillaries that carry healthy blood to the brain.

Alcohol: As with smoking, drinking too much for a long period of time affects the vascular system of the brain. Drinking in moderation has shown no ill effects on brain health.

Use it or lose it: The brain must be exercised, like your body. To keep those synapses firing, stay active, maintain social connections, do puzzles, read and play games.

You may not see the effects of these risk factors immediately, but they can accumulate over time, causing slow brain damage not fully recognized until you are elderly. And by then it is too late. Although there are promising developments on the horizon, such as diagnostic brain scans and nerve cell therapies, we have no treatment or cure for Alzheimer's...yet. Since you can't change your genes, choosing healthy habits is the answer to your question.

"Genetics Leading Cause of Dementia," by Jane Glenn Haas (MCT News Service), *The San Diego Union-Tribune*, 11/1/2011. Alzheimer's Association: www.alz.org, (800) 272-3900. "Neuroscience Advances Bring Us Closer to Cures," Jeffrey L. Cummings, in *New Thinking About Thinking*, The Cleveland Clinic, Fall 2011.

JOKE OF THE MONTH

What is the difference between ignorance, apathy and ambivalence?

I don't know, and I don't care one way or the other.

—A *Prairie Home Companion* Pretty Good Joke Book

Laughter is known to boost the immune system, lower blood pressure, burn calories and release pleasure-inducing chemicals in the brain.

Go Green!

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Do you or does someone you know need our assistance? Call toll-free (888) 994-3863 or visit www.wrpioneers.org to find out more about our assistance programs.



The Motion Picture Pioneers Assistance Fund is a program of the Will Rogers Motion Picture Pioneers Foundation.



CHOOSING YOUR DAILY DRINK



Each day, you choose what to eat and drink. You see articles and advice columns everywhere about how to eat healthy, but what about your drink choices?

Coffee, water, wine, juice, soda pop, beer, booze, milk, tea? Diet or regular? Most people are loyal to their familiar regimen of liquid consumption. However, next time you grab a cold one, consider the following:

- 1) Regular soda: Last year, the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition* published a study in which they found that men who drank an average of one glass, can or bottle of regular soda per day had a 24 percent greater risk of getting Type 2 diabetes than those who drank diet soda or coffee!
- 2) Coffee has been studied for a long time, and there are no findings to suggest that it has any adverse effects in moderate amounts. In fact, new studies are showing that coffee drinkers may benefit from

the chemical compounds in coffee that lower the risk of certain diseases.

- 3) Juices are generally very high in sugar. Most nutrition experts agree that it is wiser to choose the whole fruit rather than the juice whenever possible. This gives you benefit of the fruit, such as fiber and flavor, without added sugar or processing.
- 4) Water is the best bet at every turn. From your skin to your eyes, your body needs water to function properly. Dehydration is a real risk factor for poor health, especially in elders and in people who have healing wounds. How much water you should drink depends on your weight, activity level and environment. Bottles or tap, it doesn't matter—as long as you keep everything flowing smoothly.

Hot or cold, fizzy or flat depends on your preference, and you should definitely drink something you like. All liquids count toward your daily fluid intake. Just be mindful, when you “pick your poison,” to swig something smart.

Sources: “Water: How Much Should You Drink Every Day?,” www.mayoclinic.com. “Coffee May Ward Off Lethal Prostate Cancer,” National Institutes of Health Research Matters. “Quick Studies: Soda & Diabetes,” *Nutrition Action Health Letter*, May 2011.

NEW ADDITIONS TO THE MPPAF'S NATIONAL RESOURCE DIRECTORY

United States Department of Labor, www.dol.gov, (866) 487-2365

The U.S. Department of Labor provides free information and services to job seekers. Visit its website and browse by “Audience” to view “Job Seekers/Unemployed” information, such as job training and layoff resources.

Actors Fund Work Program, www.actorsfund.org, New York: (917) 281-5953, Los Angeles: (323) 330-2451

The Actors Fund Work Program, offered by the Actors Fund of America, is an employment and training program. Orientations are held every Monday in New York and Los Angeles. Check its website for more details.

QUOTE OF THE MONTH



“The minute a thing is long and complicated, it confuses. Whoever wrote the Ten Commandments made 'em short. They may not always be kept, but they can be understood.”

—Will Rogers

To view our entire National Resource Directory, please visit www.wrpioneers.org.