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# VEPACHEDU EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION

## The Telangana Science Journal

Health and Nutrition

[TIACS-subscribe@yahoogroups.com](mailto:TIACS-subscribe@yahoogroups.com) (The Indian American Chemical Society)

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### Zap Your Memory

A mild zap of electricity to part of the brain may help people to learn better, a new study suggests. Researchers are hoping this approach someday may help people with Alzheimer's disease. The New England Journal of Medicine published the study.

Simple exercises to help memory:

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- Organize lists into useful categories to help memory.
- Use mnemonics. Think of a word you can spell using the first letters from each item on a list, to jog memory. This is known as a mnemonic.
- Remember things by linking them with a picture or another association.
- Look for and recognize patterns.
- Practice visual search skills using computer games.

Regular exercise, frequent social contact and getting enough sleep also seem to promote good memory function.

Cholinesterase inhibitors work by allowing the buildup of the chemical acetylcholine in the brain. This chemical is needed for normal brain function. Medicines include:

- Tacrine (Cognex)
- Donepezil (Aricept)
- Rivastigmine (Exelon)
- Galantamine (Reminyl)

Regular physical activity is better than occasional all-out workouts.

### Citrus Fruits

Oranges and other citrus contain vitamin C, potassium, fiber and antioxidants known as flavonoids. In a new study that suggests citrus fruits may help to reduce stroke risk, women who consumed the most flavanones in all kinds of foods had a 19% lower risk of stroke than those who ate none. Both reductions in risk were for the most common type of stroke, which is caused by a blood clot. Flavanones are part of a

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broader group of compounds called flavonoids. These substances are also found in tea, dark chocolate and many colorful fruits such as grapes and vegetables. The journal Stroke published the study February 23.

### How to Prevent Stroke and Alzheimer's

- Control high blood pressure.
- Maintain a healthy weight.
- Exercise regularly.
- Eat a diet rich in fruit, vegetables and fiber.
- Eat omega-3-fat-rich diet of spinach, Indian spinach, purselane (verdalago), urad (black gram), walnuts, flax seed and oil, etc.
- Avoid animal fats.
- Cut down on salt.
- Keep cholesterol under control.
- Quit smoking and never start smoking.
- Quit alcoholic drinks and never start drinking any alcoholic drinks.
- If you have diabetes, keep your blood sugar under control.

Living in a crowded city or near a busy highway may be tied to a higher chance of having a stroke or losing your memory, new research suggests in the Archives of Internal Medicine. Nearly 800,000 Americans suffer a stroke every year, according to the American Heart Association. <http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/02/13/us-air-pollution-memory-loss-idUSTRE81C24N20120213>

A diet made up of fruits, vegetables, olive oil, legumes, and whole grains may be good for your brain and may reduce small-vessel damage to the brain, according to a new study published in the Archives of Neurology. Small vessel disease is a condition in which the small arteries in the heart become narrowed. The disease can cause signs of heart disease, including chest pain and artery blockages, and it is most common in women and diabetics, according to Mayo Clinic. The lesions are also linked to cognitive disorders, including Alzheimer's disease.

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### Omega 3 Fats

Older adults who had the highest blood levels of omega-3 fatty acids were 30 percent less likely to later develop an irregular heartbeat than peers with the lowest blood levels of omega-3s, according to a U.S. study. Omega-3s are found in spinach, Indian spinach, purselane (verdalago), urad (black gram), walnuts, flax seed and oil, etc. The omega-3 fatty acids measured in the new study, which was published in the journal *Circulation*, were eicosapentaenoic acid (EPA), docosapentaenoic acid (DPA) and docosahexaenoic acid (DHA). A 30 percent reduction in risk would mean that instead of 25 out of every 100 people developing a condition, only about 17 of every 100 would. Of the three omega-3 fatty acids, high DHA levels were linked to a 23 percent lower risk for atrial fibrillation, while EPA and DPA were not tied to any reduced risk.

### Green Tea

In a study, green-tea lovers generally had healthier diets, including more vegetables and fruit, as well as more education, lower smoking rates, fewer heart attacks and strokes, and greater mental sharpness. Green tea contains antioxidant chemicals that may help ward off the cell damage that can lead to disease. Elderly adults who regularly drink green tea may stay more agile and independent than their peers over time, according to the Japanese study that covered thousands of people, published in the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*.

### Smoking

Smoking seemed to speed up the cognitive aging process, making men function mentally as if they were 10 years older, according to a study published in the *Archives of General Psychiatry*. Researchers said there are several factors that could explain the connection between smoking and mental decline. One reason could lie in the way smoking affects the heart, lungs and blood vessels. Because smoking ups the risk of vascular disease, it could limit the body's ability to deliver the blood, oxygen and nutrients the brain needs to function at its best.

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### Secondhand Smoke

In the first national estimate of its kind, a report from government researchers says more than 1 in 5 high school students and middle schoolers ride in cars while others are smoking. This kind of secondhand smoke exposure has been linked with breathing problems and allergy symptoms, and more restrictions are needed to prevent it, the report says. The research, from the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, was released online in Pediatrics.

The CDC advises parents to not allow smoking in their homes and cars, and says opening a car window will not protect kids from cigarette smoke inside. Measures banning smoking in cars when children are present have been enacted in a handful of states and proposed in several others. The study authors say similar bans should be adopted elsewhere.

### Whooping Cough Vaccine for Adults

Whooping cough, or pertussis, is a highly contagious bacterial disease that in rare cases can be fatal. It leads to severe coughing that causes children to make a distinctive whooping sound as they gasp for breath. Contributing to the push to vaccinate more adults was a California whooping cough epidemic in 2010 that infected 9,000. Ten babies died after exposure to infected adults or older children.

Children have been vaccinated against whooping cough since the 1940s, but a vaccine for adolescents and adults was not licensed until 2005. Since then, the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices has gradually added groups of adults to its recommendations, including 2010 advice that it be given to elderly people who spend a lot of time around infants. The advisory panel wants all U.S. adults to get vaccinated against whooping cough. The panel voted recently to expand its recommendation to include all those 65 and older who haven't gotten a whooping cough shot as an adult.

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The adult vaccine combines protection against tetanus, diphtheria and whooping cough. One version of the vaccine, made by GlaxoSmithKline, was licensed for use in the elderly last year. The committee said another version, made by Sanofi Pasteur, can also be given. Both cost about \$35 a dose.

### Colonoscopy

Colorectal cancer is the second leading cause of cancer death in the United States and the fourth worldwide. More than 143,000 new cases of cancers of the colon or rectum are expected in the U.S. this year and nearly 52,000 people will die from it, according to the American Cancer Society.

A government-appointed panel of experts recommends one of three methods: annual stool blood tests; a sigmoidoscopy (scope exam of the lower bowel) every five years, plus stool tests every three years; or a colonoscopy once a decade.

In a colonoscopy, a thin, flexible tube with a tiny camera is guided through the large intestine. Growths can be snipped off and checked for cancer. Patients are sedated, but many dread the test because it requires patients to eat a modified diet and drink solutions the day before to clear out the bowel. It usually costs more than \$1,000, compared with a \$20 stool test. Researchers at Sloan-Kettering previously showed that removing polyps during colonoscopy can prevent colon cancer from developing, but it was not clear whether it saved lives.

A major study offers clear evidence that removing precancerous growths spotted during the test can cut the risk of dying from colon cancer in half. Doctors have long assumed a benefit, but research hasn't shown before that removing polyps would improve survival -- the key measure of any cancer screening's worth. <http://www.intelihealth.com/IH/ihtIH/EMIHC267/24479/24524/1430185.html?d=dmtICNNews>

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#### Tai Chi May Be Good for Parkinson's

Practicing tai chi may help people with Parkinson's disease improve their movement and balance and reduce their risk of falls. In a new study, tai chi provided more benefits than two other exercise programs. Tai chi is an ancient Chinese art that involves slow, controlled movements. The tai chi group showed more improvements than the other groups in balance, control of movement, and the length and speed of people's stride when walking. In other measurements, such as reducing falls, the tai chi group did better than the stretching group and as well as the resistance group. The New England Journal of Medicine published the study.

Recent research, published in mainstream medical journals, has found benefits from practicing tai chi. They included:

- Reduced anxiety and depression
- Lower blood pressure
- Less pain and fatigue among people with fibromyalgia
- Improved measures of bone health that may postpone or prevent osteoporosis
- Improved quality of life for people with heart failure

#### Practice Makes Perfect

Whether it is playing a musical piece over and over again even after you have the notes and timing down cold, or throwing a ball or swinging a racket after your coach tells you things look great, there appears to still be a benefit to practicing. A study published in the *Journal of Neuroscience* suggests that efficient movements ultimately involve both efficient biomechanics and efficient neural processing, or thinking. <http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2012/02/120209144013.htm>

#### Vegetarian Breakfast Recipes

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[http://vegetarian.about.com/od/breakfastrecipe1/Breakfast\\_Recipes.htm](http://vegetarian.about.com/od/breakfastrecipe1/Breakfast_Recipes.htm)

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**Om! Asatoma Sadgamaya, Tamasoma Jyotirgamaya, Mrityorma Amritangamaya, Om Shantih, Shantih, Shantih!**

**(Aum! Lead the world from wrong path to the right path, from ignorance to knowledge, from mortality to immortality, and peace!)**

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