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alzheimer's  association  
*Brain Matters*

Early December E-Newsletter

December 6, 2010

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**Dysfunction In Blood Vessel Walls Could Be Risk Factor For Alzheimer's As Well As Heart Disease**

• **Let's Pass the National Alzheimer's Project Act - NAPA**

Alzheimer's disease is the public health crisis of the 21st century. One in eight baby boomers will soon reach the age of greatest risk for Alzheimer's and 10 million American baby boomers will develop Alzheimer's.



Yet there is no national plan on how to deal with this looming crisis, and NAPA will create this vital plan.

The good news - the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) committee is considering the National Alzheimer's Project Act (NAPA).

Urge your senator to pass the bill by clicking on the link below. Ask them to:

Work with their colleagues to pass the National Alzheimer's Project Act (S. 3036) before the end of this session of Congress.

1. NAPA will create a nationwide strategy to overcome Alzheimer's disease.

2. NAPA is a non-controversial, no-cost bill to combat Alzheimer's disease. It will maximize all federal efforts, including federally funded research, care, and services.

[Tell The Senate To Pass NAPA - NOW!](#)

• **Walking May Reduce Risk of Alzheimer's**



Walking may put



New research from Dr Zvonimir S. Katusic and his colleagues at Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota, suggests that a blood vessel dysfunction already linked to cardiovascular disease may also account for the build up of amyloid plaques in the brain, a characteristic trait of Alzheimer's disease.

Previous studies have already suggested people with several cardiovascular risk factors are also at higher risk of developing Alzheimer's disease, but the nature of these links was somewhat unclear.

However, one common biological feature of these cardiovascular risk factors is lack of nitric oxide in the endothelium, the layer of cells that lines the walls of blood vessels.

Dr Katusic says: "If you look at any risk factor for cardiovascular disease -- the standard risk factors like high cholesterol, diabetes, hypertension, smoking, sedentary lifestyle, aging -- all of these have been associated with loss of nitric oxide in the endothelium, a condition known as endothelial dysfunction."

the brakes on cognitive decline in healthy older people as well as those with cognitive impairment, a new study finds.

The ongoing study, which spans 20 years, also quantified how much walking is necessary to keep brain volume up. Researchers followed 426 older adults for a number of years to see if there were changes in brain volume. Among the participants 299 were healthy, and 127 had cognitive impairments, including 83 with mild cognitive impairment, and 44 with Alzheimer's disease.

The more people moved, the higher their brain volume, a marker for brain health. That link held after adjusting for factors such as age, gender, body mass index and education. People who met the requirements for activity also scored better on a mental exam.

For healthy adults, walking at least 72 blocks a week (about six miles) to preserve brain volume and slow the risk of cognitive decline. Cognitively impaired adults needed to walk at least 58 city blocks a week (about five miles) to achieve the same results.

• **Tips For Holidays With Someone Who Has Dementia**

Many people whose holidays will involve a relative or friend with dementia are familiar with that apprehensive feeling. Even adult children have it. It's called being human.



[Click here to learn how to brighten your holiday experience](#) when celebrating with someone with Alzheimer's or a related dementia.

*Click on the image above for gift ideas for the caregivers.*

• **The Chapter View - From 12 Inches**

**MEMORY WALK**

Thanks to everyone who participated in one of the

Nitric oxide (NO) plays an important role keeping blood vessels open (vasodilation) so blood can flow unimpeded and deliver oxygen and nutrients to surrounding tissue, including the brain.

[Read more...](#)

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### Quick Links...

- [Visit Our Website](#)
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- [ADVOCATE!](#)
- [Upcoming Events](#)
- [Personalized Family Support](#)
- [BE OUR FRIEND \(on Facebook\)](#)

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FIFTEEN Memory Walks this year! All told, we had more than 7000 participants (almost a 50% increase from last year). With the help of those walkers, we raised \$763,000 for Alzheimer's in support of our Programs and Services! THANKS SO MUCH!!!

As a reminder - Memory Walk *will change its name* - next year it will be the **WALK TO END ALZHEIMER'S**.

### CAREGIVER CONFERENCES

Our Caregiver Conferences (in Beaumont & Houston) featured Coach Frank Broyles' daughter & granddaughter. Special thanks to our sponsors: **Silverado Senior Living Conference Sponsor**, **Parkway Place Breakfast/Break Sponsor**, **LivHOME Breakfast/Break Sponsor**; **Brookdale Senior Living Breakfast/Break Sponsor**

### SEEKING SPEAKERS BUREAU VOLUNTEERS

Are you ready to *MOVE the Cause Forward*? **Volunteer** to become a Speakers Bureau member today - [click here to learn how.](#)

Speakers Bureau Volunteers are trained to help educate the community by delivering chapter-developed presentations about Alzheimer's disease and sharing information about Chapter services.