

alzheimer's  association®
houston & southeast texas chapter

"Brain Matters" - Valentine's Edition

Feb. 12, 2009



Activity Based
Alzheimer Care:
Building a
Therapeutic
Program

Thursday, March 19,
2009
8 a.m. - 4 p.m

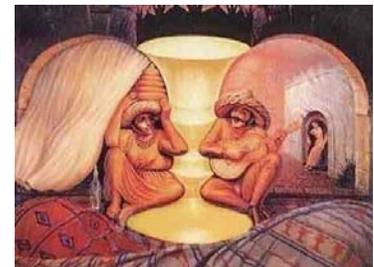
United Way Community
Resource Center
50 Waugh Drive,
Houston, Texas 77007

Registration Fee: \$90
includes CEU's,
continental breakfast,
lunch, training manual,
and registration
materials.

713 314 1333

[More on-line](#)

Alzheimer's Disease and
Dementia Series



Last Wednesday of every
month, 7PM

February 25th to May 27th
West University Community
Center

**Brain Protein May Have Potential
Against Alzheimer's**

Study in animals finds memory improvements and
less cell degeneration

Posted February 8, 2009

SUNDAY, Feb. 8 (HealthDay News) -- A naturally
occurring brain protein appears able to slow or stop
Alzheimer's disease in recent studies done on animal
models.

The brain's entorhinal cortex, which supports memory,
normally produces brain-derived neurotrophic factor
(BDNF); however, its production appears to decrease
when Alzheimer's is present. When researchers injected
BDNF in lab animals that either were aged, had
entorhinal cortex damage or were genetically altered to
have Alzheimer's-like symptoms, they found that the
animals had improved memory and cognitive skills and
that cell degeneration and death was prevented or
reversed.

"The effects of BDNF were potent," researcher Dr. Mark Tuszynski, professor of neurosciences at the University of California, San Diego, School of Medicine, said in a news release issued by the school. "When we administered BDNF to memory circuits in the brain, we directly stimulated their activity and prevented cell death from the underlying disease."

The animals receiving the treatment -- transgenic mouse models of Alzheimer's disease, aged rats, rats with induced damage to the entorhinal cortex, aged rhesus monkeys and monkeys with entorhinal cortex damage -- also showed long-term benefits. They began producing more BDNF on their own and exhibited better brain cell signaling and neuronal function, whereas the untreated animals degenerated further. The hippocampus, the brain's short-term memory processing center, which Alzheimer's disease can quickly damage, also appeared to show improvement.

[Read the rest of the article](#)

[Listen to the story on National Public Radio](#)

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Cognitive Training Can Alter Biochemistry Of The Brain

ScienceDaily (Feb. 9, 2009) - Researchers at the Swedish medical university Karolinska Institutet have shown for the first time that the active training of the working memory brings about visible changes in the number of dopamine receptors in the human brain. The study, which is published in the journal *Science*, was conducted with the help of PET scanning and provides deeper insight into the complex interplay between cognition and the brain's biological structure.

"Brain biochemistry doesn't just underpin our mental activity; our mental activity and thinking process can also affect the biochemistry," says Professor Torkel Klingberg, who led the study. "This hasn't been demonstrated in humans before, and opens up a floodgate of fascinating questions."

Scout House
6108 Edloe St.
Houston, TX 77005

2/25

The Basics: An Introduction to Alzheimer's Disease

3/25

Food for Thought: Tips on Building a Healthier Brain

4/29

Before the Burnout: Stress Management Tips for Caregivers

5/27

Reconnect: Communicating with Persons with Dementia

To register, call
713 314 1313

Helpful Links

[Local Resources & Referral Lists](#)

[Local Support Groups](#)

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Alzheimer's in the African American Community

Isla Carroll Turner Lecture in Gerontology
by

Goldie S. Byrd, Ph.D.

North Carolina A&T State University

7:00 p.m.

FREE admission

Tuesday,

February 17, 2009

University of Houston

M.D. Anderson Library -
Rockwell Pavilion

4800 Calhoun Road
(Entrance 1)

[Parking Link](#)

713-743-3599

CEUs available for a fee.

Professor Klingberg and his colleagues have previously shown that the working memory can be improved with a few weeks' intensive training. Through a collaborative project conducted under the Stockholm Brain Institute, the researchers have now taken a step further and monitored the brain using Positron Emission Tomography (PET scans), and have confirmed that intensive brain training leads to a change in the number of dopamine D1 receptors in the cortex.

[Read more about brain training](#)

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