

WTNS Radio OSU Extension Update for July 25, 2022
Healthy People. Healthy Finances. Healthy Relationships.

On today's OSU Extension update for Healthy People, Healthy Finances, & Healthy Relationships we'll talk about brain health, and as always look at some upcoming programs from OSU Extension.

The human brain is fascinating. I recently visited a science museum with my kids and participated in an interactive display developed by the South Florida Science Center and Florida Atlantic University's Brain Institute. We were able to see a specimen of the human brain and spinal cord. There were also many interactive exhibits revealing how amazing our senses are, testing reaction times, and even exposing how easy it can be to detect when someone tells a lie.

I was also reminded of how important it is to take care of our brains. It sounds like a tall order, but many things that we should be doing to take care of other important parts of our bodies are what our brains need as well.

According to the CDC, damage to blood vessels can lead to serious health conditions such as heart disease, stroke, and dementia. Keeping your blood vessels healthy can help you have a strong heart and brain. Therefore, we should focus on ways to keep our blood vessels healthy.

The Alzheimer's Association describes dementia as a general term for loss of memory and other mental abilities severe enough to interfere with daily life. It is caused by physical changes in the brain. Alzheimer's is the most common type of dementia, but there are many kinds including vascular dementia, dementia with Lewy bodies, mixed dementia, and others.

A National Institute on Aging study looked at long-term cognitive assessments followed by brain autopsy. In 94 percent of cases where the participant was diagnosed with dementia, they had been diagnosed with Alzheimer's. However, the autopsies of those diagnosed with Alzheimer's showed that over half had a coexisting abnormality including previously undetected blood clots or other evidence of vascular disease.

Nearly 6 million Americans are living with Alzheimer's disease. By 2050, this number is projected to reach nearly 14 million. Current projections indicate that the number of persons with Alzheimer's dementia will nearly triple in the next 35 years.

There is growing scientific evidence that healthy behaviors, which have been shown to prevent cancer, diabetes, and cardiovascular disease, also may reduce risk for cognitive decline and possibly dementia.

1. Control blood pressure. High blood pressure is a leading cause of heart disease and stroke. Over time, high blood pressure puts too much stress on blood vessels. Research shows that having uncontrolled high blood pressure in midlife also raises your risk for dementia later in life.
2. Eat healthy foods and limit alcohol. Eat plenty of vegetables, fruits, whole grains, and low-fat dairy products. Aim to include seafood rich in omega-3 fatty acids (such as salmon) each week. Limit foods with added sugars and saturated fat and lower your sodium intake.
3. Get diabetes under control. Diabetes causes high blood sugar, which can damage blood vessels and nerves. This damage raises the risk for heart disease, stroke, and dementia.
4. Don't smoke. Smoking damages blood vessels and makes blood more likely to clot, which can lead to heart disease and stroke. Smoking is the leading cause of preventable death in the United States.
5. Stay active. Find ways to get your heart pumping for at least 150 minutes per week. This could be a 10 to 15-minute walk twice a day.

And now let's look at some upcoming programs from OSU Extension. There is still time to catch a "Savoring Ohio Produce" webinar this summer. The next online class is all about Peaches tomorrow (Tuesday) afternoon from 4-5 PM. Visit our website to register or watch recorded webinars anytime.

I hope to catch you at our next Food Preservation Class. We will be Making Pickles on August 4 at 6:00 PM. You can come in person to the OSU Extension Office or view the class from your own kitchen over Zoom. Register for the in-person class or register for the Zoom link at our website coshocton.osu.edu. You can find details about future programs related to financial wellness, food safety, managing diabetes, and more at our website coshocton.osu.edu.

In closing, at OSU Extension, we are proud to work for Coshocton County to help educate and improve our families, farms, and businesses. Please feel free to contact OSU Extension for more information at 740-622-2265 or visit our website at coshocton.osu.edu. Make it a healthy day!