Save the Date for 6th Annual “Mind Matters” Health Fair

This health fair is not like any other you have ever attended before! Interactive exhibits, presentations, and lunch catered by Chef Ouita!

You won’t want to miss this one! Sanders-Brown Center on Aging will hold its 6th Annual Mind Matters health fair on April 21, 2014 from 11am-3pm at the Fayette County Extension Office in Lexington, KY. The health fair is loaded with exciting hands-on activities that let you explore and learn about the latest research advances in the areas of healthy aging and Alzheimer’s disease.

The event will have interactive exhibit booths and will also include multiple presentations designed to help you maximize your brain health! Lunch and refreshments as well as admission are absolutely free of charge.
(More information continued on page 4).

So You Think You Have a Memory Problem?
New Research Study Finds That You May Be Right!

Data from the participation of volunteers in our research program was presented at the Alzheimer’s Association International Conference and made news headlines world-wide! Our study showed that older people who self-reported a change in memory at their annual cognitive assessment were almost twice as likely to be diagnosed with mild cognitive impairment (MCI) or dementia during future follow-up visits than those who did not report such a change.

The study included 531 individuals with an average age of 73 years old enrolled in the Biologically Resilient Adults in Neurological Studies who underwent annual cognitive assessments for an average of 10 years. Before each exam, participants were asked if they had noticed any changes in their memory since their last visit. More than half (55.7 percent) of the participants noted a change in memory during the course of the study. Participants who had noticed changes were almost twice as likely to be diagnosed with MCI or dementia in follow-up visits as those who had not. Initial memory complaints occurred an average of six to nine years before the dementia or MCI diagnoses. (Continued on page 4).
HELP US TO UNDERSTAND THE ROLE OF LIFESTYLE FACTORS IN AGING AND BRAIN HEALTH

We recently sent out a survey to our research volunteers that takes a comprehensive look at lifestyle factors and how they may relate to the brain’s health. Please take the time to fill out and return the survey. The more people that respond, the better able we will be to understand these important influences and how lifestyle modifications may help prevent Alzheimer’s disease and related disorders.

The idea for this project came from our volunteers’ questions about how to promote brain health that many have discussed with our staff at their annual visits. This survey is just another example of how the creativity and ideas from volunteers can help craft our research program and move the field forward.

Many studies have looked at the importance of various lifestyle factors over the years, but none have ever looked at them all together to determine which combinations of lifestyle factors are most important in determining brain health and resistance to diseases like Alzheimer’s. We know that nutrition, exercise, mental activity, and social engagement are all important factors for brain health. It has been shown that diet may slow memory decline by more than 3 years, physical exercise by another 3-5 years, mental exercise by 2-3 years and social engagement by another 2-3 years. But what we don’t know is whether these benefits are additive, leading to 12 years of additional brain health, or to what extent each factor contributes to brain health in the context of everyday lifestyle activities. We hope to be able to develop a “brain health” formula that can serve as a guide in putting together a comprehensive brain health program that will keep the mind running strong for years to come. Just like a recipe calls for certain amounts of each ingredient to create the perfect dish, we think that there may be an ideal combination of these lifestyle factors that maximizes the brain’s potential and extends healthy function over time. We’ll keep you posted on our progress and update you on the exciting results that we uncover from this project. If you have any other suggestions of lifestyle factors that may help promote brain health, please contact us at 859-323-5550. Your thoughts and ideas are incredibly important to us!

Brain Teasers for Brain Health!

Solve the picture riddles below:

1. 2. 3. 
   4. 5. 6. 
  7. 8. 9. 10. 
14. 15. 16. 17.

\[
\text{ff} yuo\ cna\ rae\ d\ ths,\ yuo\ hvae\ a\ sgtrane\ mnid\ too\ cna\ yuo\ rae\ d\ ths?\ Olny\ 55\ plepoe\ out\ of\ 100\ can.
\]

I cdnuol’t blveiee taht I cluo aclacyt uesdnatnrd\ waht\ i\ was\ rdnig.

The phaonnmeal\ pweor of the hmuun\ mnid,\ accolcmig\ to a\ rsceearch\ at\ Cmbrigde\ Univertisy,it\ dseno’t\ mtaet\ in\ waht\ oerdr\ the\ ltteres\ in\ a\ wrod\ are,\ the\ olny\ iproamtn\ thng\ is\ taht\ the\ frst\ and\ lsat\ ltteer\ be\ in\ the\ rght\ pcla.\ The\ rset\ can\ be\ a\ taotil\ mses\ and\ you\ can\ stll\ rae\ d\ whotuit\ a\ pbeerlm.\ Tlhs\ bcsuse\ the\ huamm\ mnid\ deos\ not\ rae\ ervey\ ltter\ by\ istlef,\ but\ the\ wrod\ as\ wlohe.\ Azanmig\ huh?

Beauty is in the eyes of the beholder.
What do you see in this picture? A young girl or old woman?

Answers to the picture riddles above can be found at the bottom of Page 4.
CHRONIC STRESS MAY PUT YOU AT RISK FOR MEMORY PROBLEMS & ALZHEIMER’S DISEASE

You have all probably heard about stories of 110-pound mothers lifting cars to rescue their children. These are amazing stories of supernatural strength that are well documented and understood to be the human response to emergency situations. We know that the increased abilities that many experience in such situations are not limited to physical strength. Many of you have probably recognized that you may function even better mentally when faced with a stressful challenge. This is the brain and body’s way of making sure that you are functioning at your very best to be able to face the stressful situation.

Stress causes several biological changes in the brain, including increased levels of brain chemicals that can heighten awareness and sharpen focus (like adrenaline). Additional changes in brain function come from the activity of stress hormones which are the body’s own steroids (glucocorticoids). These biochemical changes are extremely beneficial in the immediate face of danger or stress, but chronic stress can burn out the system and lead to permanent brain injury that not only reduces our thinking abilities, but also may place us at higher risk for the development of diseases like Alzheimer’s.

People who experience years of constant stress from life events, trauma, or chronic depression may develop brain changes that directly weaken brain areas that are involved in memory and thinking. These stressors may cause shrinkage in the brain areas that can predispose to Alzheimer’s disease. Animal studies have clearly demonstrated that while acute stress heightens nerve cell function in these areas, longstanding stress actually kills nerve cells, weakening the brain and creating permanent injury. Don’t let this happen to your brain! If you are under chronic stress, we may be able to help. Please contact us to visit with one of our physicians and be proactive about your brain health today!

Staff Spotlight: Dr. Ronan Murphy Joins Sanders-Brown Center on Aging

We are pleased to announce that in November, 2013, Dr. (Richard) Ronan Murphy joined the Sanders-Brown Center on Aging staff. We have been looking to bring additional memory experts on board for several years now, given the growing need for such specialists over the years, but this was not easy. Few physicians choose to focus on this important area of medicine, and we will accept nothing but the very best on our team. After years of searching, we have achieved success at last and couldn’t be more delighted!

Dr. Murphy plays an active role, visiting with research participants and providing clinical care, as an integral member of our physician staff at Sanders-Brown Center on Aging. He trained in Edinburgh, Scotland, before coming to the US and pursuing Neurology training at the University of Washington in Seattle where he has practiced for over 14 years. Dr. Murphy’s experience includes not only memory disorders, but also stroke and cerebrovascular neurology, an area of interest that we are actively pursuing at the Center, given that we are located in the heart of the stroke belt.

Dr. Murphy’s research interests focus on the use of Telemedicine to reach out to rural and underserved populations across the Commonwealth. He has also served as an Aviation Medical Examiner for the FAA and is himself an accomplished pilot. We know that you will be as delighted as we are to work with him as both he and our staff focus on maximizing your brain health.

Please help us in welcoming Dr. Murphy to our team at your next clinic visit!
So you think you have a memory problem? (continued from page 1)

Self-reported memory changes were associated with a family history of dementia, female gender, estrogen use and being overweight. "Although not all older persons with subjective memory complaints proceed to a serious cognitive impairment, our data indicate that these self-reported concerns should be taken very seriously by clinicians," said Dr. Kryscio (Leader of the biostatistics group here at UK that reported the data).

We monitor our volunteers in the research program very carefully to help identify any potential memory changes over time. We find it very important to take memory complaints seriously and we are here to provide care for anyone in our program who show signs of decline. If you are concerned about having memory or thinking changes, please call and let us know so that we can help address your concerns ASAP.

“Mind Matters” Health Fair (continued from page 1)

This year, the event will be focused on maintaining a healthy mind and body to maximize the benefits of healthy aging. Our exhibitors include scientists from the Sanders-Brown Center on Aging as well as a wide variety of local and statewide resources and services available for older adults. There will also be a number of free health screenings at the event, including memory screens, vision tests, stroke screenings, and falls risk assessments.

Anyone is welcome to attend and your friends and family are invited to come with you. Brain health is for everyone, young and old alike! No RSVP is needed, but if you have questions about the event or need directions, please call the Sanders-Brown Center on Aging at (859) 323-5550.

WHEN: APRIL 21, 2014, 11:00AM-3:00PM
WHERE: FAYETTE COUNTY EXTENSION OFFICE
1140 RED MILE PLACE, LEXINGTON, KY 40504

See map above or call us at (859) 323-5550 for directions!

ANSWERS TO THE PICTURE RIDDLES ON PAGE 2: