

Hearing Loss and Dementia Linked in Study

Seniors with hearing loss are significantly more likely to develop dementia over time than those who retain their hearing, a study by Johns Hopkins and National Institute on Aging researchers suggests. The findings, researchers say, could lead to new ways to combat dementia, a condition that affects millions of people worldwide and carries heavy societal burdens.

Although the reason for the link between the two conditions is unknown, the investigators suggest that a common pathology may underlie both or that the strain of decoding sounds over the years may overwhelm the brains of people with hearing loss, leaving them more vulnerable to dementia. They also speculate that hearing loss could lead to dementia by making individuals more socially isolated, a known risk factor for dementia and other cognitive disorders.

Whatever the cause, the scientists report, their finding may offer a starting point for interventions — even as simple as hearing aids — that could delay or prevent dementia by improving patients' hearing.

"Researchers have looked at what affects hearing loss, but few have looked at how hearing loss affects cognitive brain function," says study leader Frank Lin, M.D., Ph.D., assistant professor in the Division of Otology at Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine. "There hasn't been much crosstalk between otologists and geriatricians, so it's been unclear whether hearing loss and dementia are related."

The new study, published in the February Archives of Neurology, focused on 639 people whose hearing and cognitive abilities were tested as part of the BLSA between 1990 and 1994. While about a quarter of the volunteers had some hearing loss at the start of the study, none had dementia.

These volunteers were then closely followed with repeat examinations every one to two years, and by 2008, 58 of them had developed dementia. The researchers found that study participants with hearing loss at the beginning of the study were significantly more likely to develop dementia by the end. Compared to volunteers with normal hearing, those with mild, moderate, and severe hearing loss had twofold, threefold, and fivefold, respectively, the risk of developing dementia over time. The more hearing loss they had, the higher their likelihood of developing the memory-robbing disease.

Even after the researchers took into account other factors that are associated with risk of dementia, including diabetes, high blood pressure, age, sex and race, Lin explains, hearing loss and dementia were still strongly connected.

"A lot of people ignore hearing loss because it's such a slow and insidious process as we age," Lin says. "Even if people feel as if they are not affected, we're showing that it may well be a more serious problem."

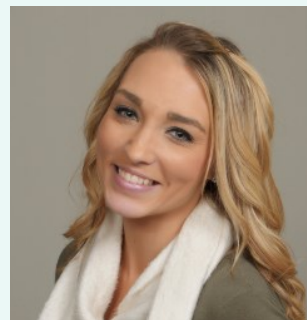
https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/news/media/releases/hearing_loss_and_dementia_linked_in_study(Last Accessed 9/16/2019)

Consultant of the Month Spencer Brown



Spencer has been fitting Miracle-Ear hearing aids for four years. He started shortly after friends and family told him about a career opportunity, helping people hear better with hearing aids. Once he learned more about the powerful impact of hearing loss on quality of life, he couldn't wait to get started. "My favorite part is to see their expression change when they try hearing aids for the first time. Some people are surprised, some are elated, and on occasion, some are so happy that they are moved to tears. Being able to share in those incredible moments is beyond words."

PCC of the Month Kirsten Standifer



Kirsten has been the Patient Care Coordinator at Miracle-Ear for almost three years. She started off as a CNA after receiving her License, only to begin a journey using her skills at Miracle-Ear. "I love that I am able to work closely with our patients and make positive changes in their lives. My favorite part of my day is helping our patients reconnect with their loved ones and seeing the excitement on their faces when they are fitted with hearing aids for the first time." When not changing lives at Miracle-Ear, you can find Kirsten and her family out enjoying the great Oregon outdoors.

COZY AUTUMN WILD RICE SOUP

Prep Time: 15 mins

Cook Time: 45 mins

Total Cook Time: 60 mins

Yields: 8 servings

- 3 tablespoons butter (*extra for sautéing onions*)
- 1 small white onion, peeled and diced
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 6 cups vegetable stock (*or chicken stock*)
- 1 cup uncooked wild rice
- 8 ounces baby bella mushrooms, sliced
- 2 medium carrots, diced
- 2 ribs celery, diced
- 1 large (*about 1 pound*) sweet potato, peeled and diced
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 1/2 tablespoon Old Bay seasoning
- 1/4 cup all-purpose flour
- 1 1/2 cups milk
- 2 large handfuls of kale, roughly chopped with thick stems removed
- Kosher salt and freshly-cracked black pepper



1. Heat (an extra) 1 tablespoon butter in a large stockpot over medium-high heat. Add onion and sauté for 5 minutes, stirring occasionally, until soft and translucent. Stir in the garlic and cook for an additional 1-2 minutes, stirring occasionally, until fragrant.
2. Add in the vegetable stock, wild rice, mushrooms, carrots, celery, sweet potato, bay leaf and Old Bay seasoning. Stir to combine.
3. Continue cooking until the soup reaches a simmer. Then reduce heat to medium-low, cover and simmer for 45 minutes, or until the rice is tender, stirring occasionally.
4. Meanwhile, during those final 10 minutes, prepare your cream sauce in a separate saucepan on the stove. In it, cook the butter over medium-high heat until melted. Whisk in the flour until combined, and cook for 1 minute. Gradually add in the milk, and whisk until combined. Continue cooking, stirring frequently, until the mixture *nearly* comes to a simmer and has thickened. (It should be very thick.)
5. Add the cream sauce and kale to the soup, and stir gently until combined. Taste and season with salt and pepper (plus any extra Old Bay seasoning, if you would like) as needed.
6. Serve warm. Or transfer to sealed container(s) and refrigerate for up to 4 days.

<https://www.gimmesomeoven.com/cozy-autumn-wild-rice-soup/print-recipe/60115/> (Last Accessed 9/19/2019)

"I had taken my hearing aid out and set it on the couch. I went to get up and could not find it, once I took a step back I heard a crunch. My hearing aid was broken beyond repair. I was very happy to find out that with the Protection Plan, my new replacement was covered at no cost!"

Charles Gammell - Eugene

Riddle of the Month

This word I know? Six letters it contains. Take away the last... and only twelve remains. What is the word?

Answer: _____

STAY TUNED! Answer will be in our November's Newsletter

Answer to August's Riddle: Hopefully You

