

## **WALKING PREVENTS MEMORY LOSS**

According to new medical research, healthy people who walk at least six miles a week have bigger brains, better memories and improved mental function compared with those who aren't physically active. Among older people showing signs of forgetfulness, walking even 20 minutes each day can slow down the progression memory loss, dementia and Alzheimer's disease.

This 10-year study of more than 400 elderly people found that greater amounts of physical activity were associated with greater brain volume. Greater brain volume, or size, is associated with better mental health. When the brain decreases in size, it means that brain cells are dying. When brain volume remains higher, it means that brain health is being maintained. The researchers note that, "walking five miles a week

protects the brain structure over 10 years in people with Alzheimer's disease and mild cognitive impairment."

Healthy adults needed to walk at least six miles a week to maintain brain volume and reduce their risk of mental decline. Of course, in addition to promoting mental health, research has shown that walking is an ideal form of exercise for maintaining physical fitness and warding off heart disease.

In summary, this study confirms what we already know – that a healthy lifestyle including regular exercise promotes healthy aging. Specifically, the results of this study suggest that regular walking on a daily basis is one of the best ways of preserving both mental and physical health as we age.

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