

# Research links diet to cognitive decline and dementia

November 6 2007

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Research has shown convincing evidence that dietary patterns practiced during adulthood are important contributors to age-related cognitive decline and dementia risk. An article published in *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences* highlights information on the benefits of diets high in fruit, vegetables, cereals and fish and low in saturated fats in reducing dementia risk.

Adults with diabetes are especially sensitive to the foods they eat with respect to cognitive function. Specifically, an adult with diabetes will experience a decline in memory function after a meal, especially if simple carbohydrate foods are consumed. While the precise physiological mechanisms underlying these dietary influences are not completely understood, the modulation of brain insulin levels likely contributes.

This deficit can be prevented through healthful food choices at meals. The findings suggest that weight maintenance reduces the risk of developing obesity-associated disorders, such as high blood pressure and high cholesterol, and is an important component of preserving cognitive health.

The work shows another benefit of maintaining healthful eating practices with aging – the same ones proposed by most diabetes and heart & stroke foundations. “This type of information should be able to empower the individual, knowing that he/she can be actively engaged in activities and lifestyles that should support cognitive health with aging,”

says Carol Greenwood, author of the study.

Source: Blackwell Publishing Ltd.

Citation: Research links diet to cognitive decline and dementia (2007, November 6) retrieved 19 April 2024 from

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