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Hope for Alzheimer's Through Nutrition

by Maureen E. Hook, Ph.D.

Research about Alzheimer's may finally be at the breakthrough stage. An article in [UVA Today](#) reports that a nutritional supplement available over-the-counter may be effective in countering the disease, according to new research conducted jointly by the University of Virginia and Northwestern University. The research is based on a naturally-occurring compound found in many foods called chiro-inositol. It is also available as a supplement, available wherever nutritional supplements are sold. What chiro-inositol does is protect the brain from the beta amyloid toxins which contribute to Alzheimer's. They also suspect that chiro-inositol assists insulin in its ability to prevent damage to neurons attacked by toxic peptides known as ADDLs, another suspected cause of Alzheimer's. Chiro-inositol by itself would not be used alone, but it points the way to other research that could utilize compounds already considered safe for humans.

In addition, it has been known for years in the field of Alzheimer's research that glucose is not used by the brain in the best way. In those afflicted with Alzheimer's, the brain does not process glucose as it should. It's almost as if the patient has diabetes (what is being referred to as Type 3 by scientists). So they have discovered that chiro-inositol helps the brain ward off the damage done by ADDL peptides. It is as if it strengthens the ability of the brain to produce enough insulin to ward off the bad ADDLs. Off course, more study needs to be done, but there is now enough information to begin some clinical trials in humans.

Dr. Michael Thorner, Medical Teaching Professor of Internal Medicine at UVA, says that researchers are now understanding the importance of insulin, as well, in the fight against Alzheimer's disease. Previously its role was not well understood, but it now believed that insulin is manufactured in the brain and is important to its metabolism. Chiro-inositol helps strengthen the brain's ability to

Hope for Alzheimer's Through Nutrition (con't.)

produce enough of and the kind of insulin needed to fight the bad ADDLs.

So stay tuned as research continues in its deliberate way to pinpoint a cure for the millions afflicted with Alzheimer's disease. (Information from Josh Barney, "Nutritional Supplement May Help Prevent Alzheimer's, UVA Research Suggests," <https://news.virginia.edu> , January 9, 2013).



Dogs and Word Association

Hook Law Center: Kit Kat, how do dogs learn to associate objects with words?

Kit Kat: Well, I must admit, I had to research this one. There is some new information available from scientists in England at the University of Lincoln that have shed some new light on this topic. In newly published research released on 11-21-12, they have found that dogs learn differently than humans when learning to associate objects with words. Previously, there was some data about dogs associating a word with a category of objects such as "toy", but how specific the knowledge was, was unknown.

Using Gable, a 5-year Border Collie, they found that, when presented with a ball, Gable zeroed in on the object's size, rather than its roundness. When asked to choose other balls from a floor full of toys, he selected other objects of similar size, rather than other balls. After additional training, he next learned the concept of similar textures, rather than of roundness.

The scientists suspect there may be evolutionary reasons for this. It's just interesting to note, then, that humans and canines learn differently. So when training your dog, remember it may take quite a bit of practice for him/her to learn the generalized concept of "roundness" or whatever else you are trying to teach him/her. He/she normally will learn the concept of "size" or notice "textures" first. (<http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2012/11/121121210253.htm>)

Isn't that interesting? Those human scientists are so smart! But they are grateful that we animals are such pleasant subjects to investigate!

Upcoming Events

- Hook Law Center is presenting a seminar to case managers and nurses on Veteran's Benefits at Heartland Hospice in Virginia Beach, VA on **February 8, 2013 at 8:30 a.m.**
- Hook Law Center will be speaking on the subject of Making an Elder Law Practice More Efficient at the VAELA Conference on **February 23, 2013** in Charlottesville, VA.
- Hook Law Center is hosting a reception to benefit the Chesapeake Humane Society at Hook Law Center's Suffolk location, 5806 Harbour View Blvd., Suite 203, Suffolk, VA 23435 on **March 14, 2013 at 5:30 p.m.**
- Hook Law Center is presenting a seminar on Estate and Long Term Care Planning to NARFE (National Active & Retired Federal Employees) Churchland Chapter 129 at Dennis' Steak and Spaghetti Restaurant, 3356 Western Branch Blvd., Chesapeake, VA on **April 9, 2013 at Noon.**
- Hook Law Center will be speaking on Reducing Medicare Liens at the Virginia Trial Lawyers Association meeting in Virginia Beach on **May 21, 2013 at 3:00 p.m.**

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