

Brain training activity linked to reduced dementia risk

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Florida researchers have presented results from a 10-year study into the effects of 'brain training' activities on healthy older people. The study found that a particular activity designed to boost the speed at which people process visual information, was associated with a reduction in memory problems and dementia.

Working with 2,785 people with an average age of 73, the researchers tested three different brain training programs: [memory training](#), reasoning training, and training designed to improve the speed and accuracy of [visual information](#) processing. Each group had 10 one-hour training sessions over a five week period.

The participants were followed up with assessments of memory and thinking at points over the next 10 years. The researchers found that 14% of those people who didn't undergo any training developed dementia over the follow-up period, but this was 12.1% for those assigned to the speed of processing training. The other two forms of training did not impact dementia rates compared to the control intervention.

Dr Simon Ridley, Director of Research at Alzheimer's Research UK, said:

"Dementia is the most feared diagnosis in the over 55s and people are keen to do whatever they can to reduce the risk of developing it. While previous research has shown that staying mentally active and socially

engaged may be linked to a lower risk of dementia, it has been much less clear as to whether specific 'brain training' programs have a beneficial effect on dementia risk. The findings presented today suggest a possible benefit for one specific type of brain [training](#) activity, but we will now need to see the published results of this study and whether the findings can be reliably replicated in larger clinical trials."

Provided by Alzheimer's Research UK

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