

The DHA PARTICIPANT



THE JOURNAL FOR PARTICIPANTS IN THE DHA RESEARCH STUDY

When Someone



Wants to Help

For some people one of the hardest things to do is accept help when it is offered. If you are a caregiver and have always been the one to do for others this can be especially difficult. Or, if you have a diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease, you may be exasperated that you can no longer do things that were once routine.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 3)

**Director's
Page**

**Quick and
Healthy
Recipes?
You Bet!**

Q&A
with Dr. Aisen

**WEB WEB
EVERYWHERE**

**Caregiver
Support**

Director's Page



By Joseph Quinn, MD
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Thanks to all of our gracious study participants, the DHA Study is progressing at an excellent pace. Enrollment began in January 2007 and officially ended when the last person enrolled in November 2007. The 51 sites throughout the United States screened 555 potential participants and enrolled a total of 402 study volunteers.

As of today 60 participants have passed the 12 month marker. The study will end in May 2009 when the final participant will exit the study. Then the next and critically important analysis phase will begin. We anticipate having results that we can share with you by December 2009.

Two other studies of the ability of DHA to prevent memory impairment in healthy elderly subjects are also expected to be reported by then, so we anticipate having a better understanding of both treatment and preventive effects of DHA as a result of all these efforts.

DO I **REALLY** NEED TO DO THIS FOR 18 MONTHS?

As we approach the half-way point in the DHA study, we'd like to remind participants how important the DHA study is, and the value of each person's continued participation. A variety of studies continue to show that we are on the right track with DHA, but the proof about DHA and Alzheimer's disease, one way or the other, will come from this study, provided we do not have an excessive number of participants drop out. The ability to draw conclusions from this type of study is entirely dependent on having sufficient numbers of subjects continue to the final visit.

We have received reports that some people have chosen to discontinue their participation because they do not appreciate treatment benefits, and we'd like to address that issue. Since the goal of DHA treatment is to slow down the rate of progression, we would not expect the treatment effect to be self-evident to participants. A comparison might be made to the treatment of high blood pressure or

high cholesterol—those are clearly valuable treatments but patients cannot “feel” or otherwise perceive the benefits while under treatment.

We only know that they work because of controlled clinical trials.



Similarly, we will only know if DHA is effective for Alzheimer's disease by completing the DHA study.

Other participants may discontinue because omega 3 fatty acids are available over the counter. It may be worth considering that the DHA being used in the study is a specially selected, purified version of DHA which we believe to be the best choice for Alzheimer's. It's true that this version is also available over the counter, but

it would cost about \$150 per month for the dose provided in the study.

Others may discontinue so that they can participate in other clinical trials with drugs which sound more potent, due to their ability to attack “amyloid” in brain plaques. We remind these participants that DHA appears to have anti-amyloid effects in multiple animal models of Alzheimer's disease, so may be as “anti-amyloid” as any other approach being tested in clinical trials. One of the attractive features of DHA is that it appears to be safer than any of the alternative anti-amyloid strategies under study.

Still others may simply find that the study visits are just too burdensome. We can only respond by thanking you all once again for your contributions in time and trouble to this important study. We cannot develop better treatments for Alzheimer's disease without your help, and we are grateful for your efforts. The next generation of patients will surely benefit from your efforts.



When Someone Wants to Help

Continued From Page 1

Some people see offers of help as a negative reflection of him or her, as somehow being inadequate and not being able to “do it all.” Nothing could be further from the truth. Dealing with Alzheimer’s is challenging even in

the best of circumstances. If you’ve ever felt reluctant to accept someone’s offer of help, rethink it. People offer to help out of genuine desire and concern. The next time someone offers consider saying yes.

Here are a few ideas of what friends and family could do for you:

- Ask your friend to prepare a home-cooked meal and bring it to your home. Request that your friend stay for dinner and enjoy the meal with you. Soups and stews are especially good because they can be portioned out, frozen and eaten again at future meals. Recipes and foods that have special meaning to your loved one are good too and can be fun. Certain foods can spark distant memories. For example, your friend could bring summer barbecue fare in the middle of winter. This would likely stimulate conversation about favorite barbecues from years past.
- Ask them to call you next time they are going to the grocery store to see if there’s anything you need.
- Consider asking for a gift certificate. Wouldn’t it be great to get a gift certificate for one of the following: grocery store, lawn mowing and garden care, house cleaning, manicure and pedicure, hair cut, mobile dog bathing service or a car wash?

- Have a package that needs shipping? Ask your friend to ship it for you.

If you’ve ever felt reluctant to accept someone’s offer of help,



RETHINK IT.

- Ask friends to let you know when they plan to go out to a restaurant and give you the option of ordering a take-out meal they could drop off to you on their way home.

- Can they pick up a prescription at the drug store for you?
- Come walk the dog or stay with your loved one while you walk your dog.
- Ask them to sit with your loved one for a couple of hours while you do errands, have lunch with a friend or go some where for some alone time.
- Take the kids for a few hours to an ice cream parlor, a movie, a video game hall, miniature golf, the beach, a park, a ball game, or an amusement park.
- Drop clothes off at the dry cleaner and pick up the order when it’s ready.
- Ask if your friend could take your pet to the veterinarian for its annual checkup and shots.

Although some people will decline, always offer to pay for any expenses incurred. That way they will offer again and you will feel better about their gracious assistance.



Quick and Easy Recipes that Are Healthy Too? You Bet!



When living with Alzheimer's disease or caring for a loved one with the disease it can be an ordeal to prepare a good meal that is both quick and nutritionally sound. There are ways to prepare such meals without resorting to ordering in pizza or stopping by a fast food restaurant.

* Here are a few tips that will help *

Keep your pantry, fridge and freezer well stocked so you don't have to waste time at the market more often than necessary. Keep the following on hand at all times: canned tomatoes, canned beans, canned chicken broth, canned or frozen corn, potatoes and other vegetables, frozen poultry and meats, rice, pasta, olives and salad dressings.

- * Stock your kitchen with healthy snacks such as mini carrots, fresh fruit, low sugar/low salt snack bars, nuts, peanut butter, crackers, a variety of cheeses and low-salt lunch meats, dried fruit and popcorn.
- * To stimulate appetite serve your loved one's favorite foods as much as possible.
- * Serve fun and easy-to-eat foods, such as finger foods, smoothies, milk shakes, and frozen treats such as ice cream sandwiches and popsicles.

Easy meals can be made in minutes. Consider these simple dishes:

Tuscan Pasta



Asian Soup



Pita Pockets



Anti-Oxidant Salad

Pour a large jar of marinara sauce into a saucepan. Add your favorite canned beans (drained), and a sliced zucchini. Cook the sauce over med-high heat for 5-7 minutes. Meanwhile cook the pasta according to package directions. Drain pasta and stir into saucepan. Divide pasta into serving bowls and top with grated Parmesan cheese.

Simmer Japanese Udon noodles (available at most large grocery stores) in canned chicken stock. Stir in a can of drained Asian mushrooms, a can of drained bamboo shoots, cooked and diced chicken or turkey, one teaspoon of minced gingerroot, one teaspoon of minced garlic and a dash of low-sodium soy sauce. Most produce departments carry bottled ginger and garlic already minced. The Asian products are available at most major grocery stores.

Grill a chicken breast. and slice. Slice the top 1/4 off of a pita bread. Stuff it with the sliced chicken, lettuce, diced tomato, cucumber, chopped bell pepper, cucumber slices and lettuce. Drizzle a vinaigrette salad dressing into the pocket. If your loved one likes spicy food, substitute a flavorful salsa for the vinaigrette. Serve immediately.

Toss together a bag of fresh spinach, a half-pint of fresh blueberries, 1/4 cup of dried cranberries, a handful of chopped walnuts, croutons and your favorite salad dressing. Be careful not use too much salad dressing; you don't want to cover up the flavors of the fruit.

Q & A with Paul Aisen, MD

Director of the Alzheimer's Disease Cooperative Study



Q *I have Alzheimer's disease. Does that mean my children and grand-children will get it too?*

A In general, the answer is no. There are rare families in which Alzheimer's disease is inherited; in such families, the disease usually begins at a young age (30s, 40s or 50s), and half of the children of a parent with the disease will inherit it. But the vast majority of individuals with Alzheimer's have what is referred to as "sporadic" disease. In such cases, the children and grandchildren have some increased risk (compared to those with no family history of the disease) of ultimately developing Alzheimer's disease, but no predictable inheritance pattern. In other words, in sporadic Alzheimer's disease there is some component of genetic risk, but also other poorly defined environmental/lifestyle factors influencing risk. Families affected by Alzheimer's disease should also remember that the research community is making steady progress toward effective preventive therapies.

Q *Can Alzheimer's disease be prevented?*

A At this time, Alzheimer's disease cannot be prevented. There is some evidence (that is not conclusive) that certain lifestyle factors can reduce risk; these include good general health habits, and maintaining a high level of cognitive, social and physical activity. But there has been major progress in understanding the molecular causes of Alzheimer's disease, and many scientists are optimistic that preventive treatments will be developed.

Q *Does having a stroke worsen Alzheimer's or its symptoms?*

A When a person has a stroke, a portion of the brain is damaged by interrupted blood flow. The symptoms of the stroke (such as weakness or loss of sensation) depend on the brain region affected. If a stroke involves an area of the brain important to memory and thinking, then these aspects of brain function may be impaired. If the individual had Alzheimer's disease, the cognitive symptoms may worsen.

Quick Sorbet



Breakfast Waffle Fondue



Frozen Raspberry Pie

Take a bag of frozen fruit (such as berries or peaches) out of the freezer and let warm up on the counter for 5-10 minutes. In a blender puree the frozen fruit. If it won't puree let it warm up a bit longer. Add fresh mint or cinnamon. It should be fairly stiff. Serve immediately.

Make ahead or buy frozen waffles, pancakes or French toast and defrost. In a blender whirl together a can of sliced fruit in juice (not syrup), ¼ cup maple syrup, 3 tablespoons cream cheese, ¼ teaspoon almond extract. Heat and slice the waffles (or pancakes or French toast) into "fingers". Place "fingers" on a platter and pour fruit fondue/dip into a bowl. Use fingers to dip into fruit fondue.

In a large bowl combine one defrosted container of frozen whipped topping, two 8-ounce raspberry yogurts. Gently stir the yogurt into the frozen topping, being careful not to break down the topping. Pour the mixture into a graham cracker crust. Decorate the top with frozen or fresh raspberries. Place in freezer for several hours until frozen hard. Ten minutes before serving remove from the freezer and slice into servings. This recipe can be made with any kind of fruit yogurt.

WEB WEB EVERYWHERE

Websites with advice, care-giving tips and resources continue to abound on the Web.



CAREGIVING

<http://www.sharethecare.org/> *Share caregiving advice and stories, and learn how to organize a group for a loved one.*

<http://www.ces.purdue.edu/extmedia/CFS/CFS-455.html> *Coping with Caregiving, How to Manage Stress When Caring for Elderly Relatives.*

http://www.ahaf.org/pubs/CaringCaregiver_Stress.pdf *"Care for the Caregiver: Managing Stress," from the American Health Assistance Foundation: This publication discusses the signs of stress and how to reduce it.*

<http://www.nia.nih.gov/Alzheimers/Publications/caregiverguide.htm> *Tips for Caregivers of People with Alzheimer's Disease from the National Institute on Aging.*

<http://www.aoa.gov/prof/aoaprogram/caregiver/caregiver.asp> *The Resource Room on the National Family Caregiver Support Program website offers a wide array of information from state facts on family caregiver support to a caregiver immunization toolkit to financial steps for caregivers and more.*

ELDERCARE AND ALZHEIMERS DISEASE RESOURCES

<http://www.eldercare.gov/Eldercare/Public/Home.asp> *Locate services and resources for older adults in any U.S. community. This site links older adults and their caregivers with state, local, and community agencies on aging (800-677-1116).*

<http://www.lotsahelpinghands.com/> *Coordinate rides and other services for your loved one using a group calendar that only family, friends, and volunteers can access.*

http://www.alz.org/living_with_alzheimers_respite_care.asp *Respite Care: The Alzheimer's Association has created a very informative brochure for caregivers on respite care. This brochure reviews the respite care services offered through community organizations, agencies or residential care facilities.*

<http://www.respitelocator.org/> *National Respite Care Locator.*

http://www.alz.org/living_with_alzheimers_respite_care.asp *The Adult Day Center information sheet created by the Alzheimer's Association provides useful information for caregivers. This sheet reviews such topics as selecting a center and services provided.*

ALZHEIMERS DISEASE INFORMATION

http://www.alz.org/living_with_alzheimers_african_americans.asp *African-Americans and Alzheimer's disease*

<http://www.nia.nih.gov/Alzheimers/Publications/managing.htm> *Resource List: Managing Communication and Behavioral Problems in People with Alzheimer's Disease from The Alzheimer's Disease Education and Referral Center (ADEAR). This list reviews some of the many books, manuals, reference guides, and information packages that may assist family members with communication and behavior issues.*

Caregiver Support

APPLAUSE!

Caregivers invest a tremendous amount of time and energy caring for their loved ones. In addition, many caregivers have full-time jobs, families and homes. If you care for a loved one with Alzheimer's disease, we applaud you for your generous spirit and willingness to attend to the countless tasks of care giving.

Along with the daily routine you have employed for the care of your loved one, you have agreed to be part

of a clinical research study. Your investment in research is commendable. Without caregivers, we wouldn't have study participants, and without the study participants, well, there would not be any clinical research studies that might lead to new or better treatments. We appreciate you and your desire to find an effective cure for this devastating disease called Alzheimer's.

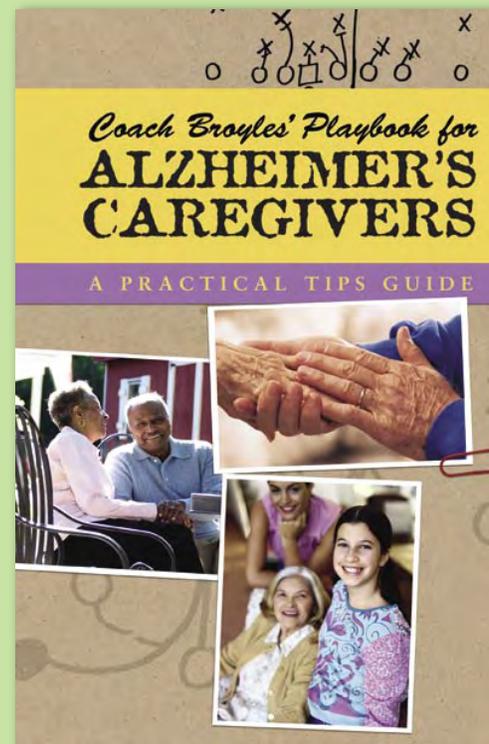
Resources

Numerous caregiver support publications are available to assist caregivers and family members with many of the issues relating to care. One such new publication, "**Coach Broyles' Playbook for Alzheimer's Caregivers: A Practical Tips Guide**" is lovingly and tenderly written. Frank Broyles, Athletic Director for the University of Arkansas Razorbacks, created this "playbook" to share all that he had learned while caring for his wife, Barbara, who had Alzheimer's disease. Besides carefully defining the stages of Alzheimer's disease, Coach Broyles gives practical "survival tips" for caregivers, including staying healthy and getting enough rest, maintaining a sense of humor, sharing with others, and making time for yourself. He offers an inventory of important matters that need attending to such as guardianships, home safety, communication tips, and the organization of health care information, important legal documents and other important personal papers for easy reference.

The playbook includes a practical and handy pocket reference of tips and strategies with sections on pacing, behavior, home safety, dressing and using the bathroom, driving, and meals.

Coach Broyles' Playbook was created to help and support caregivers and family members who are dealing with Alzheimer's disease. The book is free of charge, a gift to you, in hopes that you can benefit from his experiences.

Coach Broyles' Playbook for Alzheimer's Caregivers: A Practical Tips Guide



You can order this book from the Alzheimer's Association by calling (toll free) 1-800-272-3900.

You can also review the book online at:
<http://www.alzheimersplaybook.com/>.

BRAIN EXERCISE

Mind Games are a really fun way to exercise the mind. Check out the mind games on the AARP website — good for both caregivers who want to stay sharp and study participants with mild dementia.

http://www.aarpmagazine.org/games/printandplay_brain_teasers.html

BRAIN TEASERS

Guess the meaning of...

1 LONG
DO

2 WEAR
LONG

3 MIND
MATTER

4 T
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W
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5 T
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H

ANSWERS
1. Long Overdue 2. Long Underwear 3. Mind Over Matter 4. Downtown 5. Touchdown

The DHA ³ *PARTICIPANT*

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