

## Fish And Your Brain

By Maureen E. Hook, Ph.D.

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is brought to you by**

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Do you want to lessen your chances of being diagnosed with Alzheimer's later in life? Then, there is a simple, dietary remedy that will do just that! According to Dr. Cyrus Raji, a resident radiologist at UCLA and the lead researcher in a new study, consuming fish at least once a week vastly improves the brain's volume or size in the areas responsible for memory and cognition. Those with more voluminous brains have been shown to have a lower risk of Alzheimer's. "If you eat fish just once a week," he says, "your hippocampus--the big memory and learning center-- is 14% larger than in people who don't eat fish that frequently." The study appears in the current American Journal of Preventive Medicine. In the past, researchers had thought only physical activity and weight level could affect brain structure.

Note, however, that the fish must be broiled or baked. There were no healthful benefits deriving from fried fish. The type of fish was inconsequential. Interestingly, eating it just one time a week was as helpful as more times per week. So what does fish have that is so beneficial? At first, the researchers thought it was omega-3 fatty acids that were responsible for the benefit. However, as they looked more closely, they realized that higher levels of omega-3 fatty acids didn't affect brain size. So, they're not really sure. Some at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine think that fish possesses more DHA (docosahexaenoic acid) and EPA (eicosapentaenoic acid) which has been shown to increase the size of the amygdala and anterior cingulate gyrus. The researchers did control for other possibly confounding factors like obesity, activity level, education, age, gender, and race, but there may be something else they haven't thought of yet. Stay tuned as they continue to explore this connection.

What Dr. Raji and his fellow scientists do suspect, though, as a result of the fish study, is that it is really lifestyle factors (in this case, fish intake) "and not necessarily the presumed biological factors that can affect the structural integrity of the brain." This is really very good news! What that means, then, is that we humans can affect our overall brain health by lifestyle choices of exercise and diet. We can't completely eliminate our risk of Alzheimer's, but we can certainly do a lot to reduce that risk.

(<http://www.theatlantic.com/health/archive/2014/04/the-man-who-would-make-eating-obsolete/361058/>).



## Cruelty Consequences

**Hook Law Center:** Kit Kat, when people are cruel to animals, are there any consequences?

**Kit Kat:** Not always unfortunately, but one man recently in Brooklyn, New York was caught kicking a cat in a very extreme way. He was discovered when someone caught him on video and posted it to Facebook. He will stand trial for a misdemeanor charge of animal cruelty, and the district attorney has stated that no offer of a plea bargain will be made. He could face up to one year in jail if convicted.

I am happy to report, though, that his victim, King, a 1-year-old male cat is doing well. His picture appears in the latest Fall 2014 ASPCA Action magazine (p.5). He is a beautiful grey cat with white chest and feet. The event occurred on May 6, 2014, and he was adopted in June. His new owner said he does not appear to have any lasting negative effects of the incident. She says he is 'a real New Yorker!'

## Upcoming Events

- **October 16 – 17, 2014** - Andrew Hook and Shannon Laymon-Pecoraro will be attending the 2014 Special Needs Alliance Conference in St. Petersburg, FL.
- **October 23, 2014** - Andrew Hook will speak on The Top Issues Every Practitioner Needs to Know How to Spot Related to Elder Law to the Virginia Beach Bar Association.
- **October 29, 2014** - Hook Law Center will be represented at the Virginia Beach 2014 Senior Showcase at the Princess Anne Recreation Center, 1400 Nimmo Parkway, Virginia Beach, VA 23456 from 9:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. This event is free and open to the public.

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