

The Memory Practice Newsletter

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In this issue Dr. Michelon tells you about Computerized Brain Training Programs.

Visit our website

www.thememorypractice.com

And learn about how to:

- Exercise your brain at home
- Organize a brain support group for your residents

Do Brain Age and other computerized brain training programs work?

The hand-held computer game Brain Age was launched in 2006 in the US. Since then millions of people have bought the game. There is clearly an interest in healthy aging and people these days understand that keeping the brain active is one of the keys to healthy aging.

Research suggests that people who engage in stimulating intellectual activities have less risks of developing dementia. But do we have any evidence showing that computerized brain exercise programs have an effect of brain functions? The good news is that the answer is yes! New studies are conducted every day and the results are promising.

Here is an example:

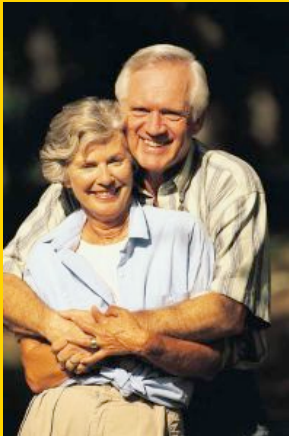
Posit Science Classic Program

This program includes 6 exercises that target auditory or sound processing. The exercises encourage faster sound processing, gives the brain practice distinguishing similar sounds to help it interpret speech and store clear memories of it. One exercise also stimulates short-term memory for instructions heard and another one, memory for details of stories heard.

Recent evidence

Published in 2006 by Dr. Merzenich and his colleagues in PNAS.

Number of participants: 182 adults, aged 60 to 87 (mean of 70.9 years), education range from 10 to 22 years (mean of 16.3), 50% were female, none had been diagnosed with dementia.



At The Memory Practice we develop brain exercises to help adults boost their memory and keep their brain fit.

Our exercises target all brain functions including memory. They are stimulating and fun.

With our Home Program **brain exercises are sent directly to your home.**

Contact us to set up a **FREE assessment** for your client, your loved one or for yourself!

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The participants were randomly assigned to 3 groups:

1. Computer-based training group: participants worked on the exercises for 60 min per day, 5 days per week, for 8 – 10 weeks using a computer in their own home
2. Active computer-based control group: participants watched and listened to DVD-based educational lectures and other programs by using the DVD player of their computers. (60 min per day, 5 days per week, 8 –10 weeks)
3. No contact control group

Results

- Participants in the training group got better at the exercises.
- Importantly: only the participants in the training group also showed improvements in non- trained, standardized assessments of auditory memory.

The result of interest here is that the benefit from the training transferred to untrained tasks. Although the untrained tasks involved abilities close to the trained abilities (memory for things that you hear) they were different tasks with different material.

Conclusion

There is evidence that computerized brain training can help healthy older adults improve their brain functions. (Note that Brain Age has not conducted any studies to back up their program).

What if you don't like or don't have a computer? We will be happy to send you paper-and-pencil brain exercises directly to your home! Contact us at (314) 726 -5105 or thememorypractice@yahoo.com

References

Mahncke, H. W., Connor, B. B., Appelman, J., Ahsanuddin, O. N., Hardy, J. L., Wood, R. A., Joyce, N. M., Boniske, T., Atkins, S. M., & Merzenich, M. M. (2006). Memory enhancement in healthy older adults using a brain plasticity-based training program: A randomized, controlled study. *PNAS*, 103(33), 12523-12528.