



FRIDAY ALERT



Alliance for Retired Americans

815 16th Street, NW, Fourth Floor • Washington, DC 20006 • 202.637.5399

www.retiredamericans.org

Spanish version: www.alianzadejubilados.org

November 25, 2022

Researchers Find Evidence That Aerobic Exercise Reinvigorates the Aging Brain

A new [study](#) by the Institute for Exercise and Environmental Medicine has found evidence that regular aerobic exercise improves blood flow to the brain which researchers believe can keep older people sharper as they age.

The brain requires about 20% of the body's total blood flow to maintain its function as an organ but as people age, blood starts to flow less freely in and out of the brain. Less blood flow not only means the brain is receiving lower levels of oxygen and nutrients but more toxins can build up in the brain.



The researchers set out to see if exercise could specifically improve brain blood flow. They followed a group of adults aged 60-80. Each group exercised for 30 minutes four to five times a week, with half “power walking” and the others working on stretching and muscle-toning.

After a year of exercise, researchers performed brain scans and arterial tests to see how well blood was flowing in and out of the participants' brains. The power walking group showed a significant improvement in brain blood flow by the end of the year, but the stretching and toning group did not.

“This study provides more evidence of the importance of staying active,” said Alliance President **Robert Roach, Jr.** “Doctors have told us for years that aerobic exercise is important for our hearts, and it turns out it's good for our brains as well.”

RSV Hospitalization Rate is 10 Times Higher for Seniors This Year

Experts are [sounding the alarm](#) as an unusually high number of older Americans are contracting Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) and experiencing complications. The CDC estimates that RSV hospitalization rates are 10 times higher than they were at the same point in the season during previous years.

The situation has been exacerbated as more seniors shed masks and venture out to places that might have seemed too risky a year ago. RSV can cause severe illness for adults aged 65 years and older, but it's often overlooked because it's mainly thought of as a pediatric illness.

RSV symptoms can resemble those of a common cold, including runny nose, sneezing, coughing, and fever. People who are infected can generally recover after resting and drinking plenty of fluids, but complications like trouble breathing and pneumonia can occur, especially for older patients.

"It's important to stay vigilant, especially as we enter the holiday season," said **Richard Fiesta**, Executive Director of the Alliance. "The CDC is urging people who experience cold or flu symptoms to contact their doctor for guidance."

Long-Term Care Affordability Crisis Looms As Middle-Income Seniors Age

New research [indicates that](#) the population of middle-income seniors will increase by 89 percent between now and 2033 – and that nearly 75 percent won't be able to afford long-term care. Only 3% of Americans currently have long-term care insurance.

Since Medicare doesn't pay for long-term care services, older Americans with mid-level incomes are often forced to either pay high out of pocket costs or spend down their assets so they qualify for Medicaid.

"Congress needs to take this long term crisis seriously," said **Joseph Peters, Jr.**, Secretary-Treasurer of the Alliance. "In addition to the costs being out of reach for most families, there is a shortage of caregivers to take care of these Americans. People who do this important work deserve to be paid a fair wage, and should be able to join or form a union to improve working conditions and safety."

Kaiser Health News: Sick Profit: Investigating Private Equity's Stealthy Takeover of Health Care Across Cities and Specialties **By Fred Schulte**

Two-year-old **Zion Gastelum** died just days after dentists performed root canals and put crowns on six baby teeth at a clinic affiliated with a private equity firm.

His parents sued the Kool Smiles dental clinic in Yuma, Arizona, and its private equity investor, FFL Partners. They argued the procedures were done needlessly, in keeping with a corporate strategy to maximize profits by overtreating kids from lower-income families enrolled in Medicaid. Zion died after being diagnosed with "brain damage caused by a lack of oxygen," according to the lawsuit.

Kool Smiles "overtreats, underperforms and overbills," the family alleged in the suit, which was settled last year under confidential terms. FFL Partners and Kool Smiles had no comment but denied liability in court filings.

Private equity is rapidly moving to reshape health care in America, coming off a banner year in 2021, when the deep-pocketed firms plowed \$206 billion into more than 1,400 health care acquisitions, according to industry tracker PitchBook.

Read more [here](#).

Washington State Alliance Holds Annual Meeting

The Washington State Alliance (WSARA) held its annual meeting on Wednesday and re-elected **Jackie Boschok** as its President.

Executive Director **Fiesta** spoke to the attendees about the senior vote in the midterm elections and what issues Congress is expected to take up before the end of the year. **Julie Bouanna** of the Washington Fair Trade Coalition gave remarks on “Seniors and Trade.”

The Alliance for Retired Americans is a national organization that advocates for the rights and well-being of over 4.4 million retirees and their families.