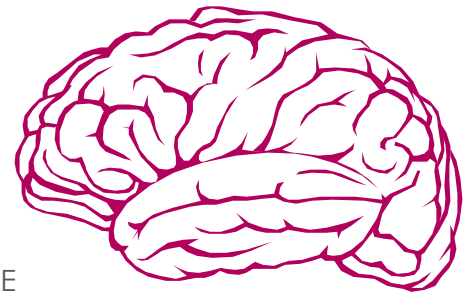


TBI Updates

TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY MODEL SYSTEM
UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF REHABILITATION MEDICINE



Volume 7

Number 1

Nutrition After a TBI *By Melissa Montalto, MS, RD, CD*

Research indicates that nutrition support immediately after TBI and during rehabilitation is critical for healing. Once patients are home; however, it is just as important to maintain a healthy lifestyle in order to promote optimal



brain function. While there may be diverse nutrition issues for the TBI patient, depending on his/her medical situation, certain nutrition and lifestyle factors can be followed by most in order to stay healthy. Here are a few tips for optimal health:

(1.) Consume a diet that includes fresh fruits and vegetables (5-9 servings/day) and whole grains. These foods contain fiber, which can help control blood sugars and create feelings of fullness (helpful for weight loss and/or

maintenance). Fruits and vegetables also contain antioxidants which can protect your cells from damage.

(2.) Eat the right kinds of fats. Omega-3 fatty acids are found in foods like salmon, walnuts and pumpkin seeds, and play important roles in brain development, mood, and cognition. Decrease your saturated fat content (from animal products), and avoid trans fats altogether.

(3.) Drink plenty of water! Drinking at least 8 cups of water per day will help ensure that you don't become dehydrated, which can affect mentation and mood.

(4.) Exercise can be a social event and a great excuse to get outside. It will also facilitate building muscle, managing weight, and improving mood.

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Who's Who



Julia Fryer

Julia is a Research Assistant for the Traumatic Brain Injury Model System Study. Her duties include recruitment, enrollment and the collection of baseline measures for both the Model system study and the TBI Caregiver study at Harborview Medical Center. In addition, she currently handles the telephone follow-up interviews for the TBI Caregiver study.

Julia received her Bachelors of Science in Public Health from the University of Washington and previously worked as Research Project Interviewer for the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center.

In her spare time she enjoys volunteering as a HIV/AIDS and Blood-Born Pathogen Educator for the American Red Cross and is part of The Seattle-King County Dept. of Public Health Reserve Corp of volunteers where she has received training through the Department of Homeland Security/FEMA to act as a first responder in the event of an Emergency. Her other interests include home restoration, gardening, baking and taking care of her four cats.

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(5.) Set a schedule for eating to create an environment of stability. Avoid distractions while eating (i.e. watching TV, loud noises) to facilitate focus on and enjoyment of your food.



These are just a few tips you can take to keep both your body and mind healthy. Registered dietitians and/or nutritionists are a great resource for education and counseling based on individual needs. Ask your doctor for a referral!



Resources:

> www.nutritionmd.org

This website has great general nutrition information and an interactive meal planner. It also provides nutrition information for specific disease states, although not TBI specifically.

> **Eating Well for Optimum Health: The essential guide to bringing health and pleasure back to eating**, by Dr. Andrew Weil.

A wonderful nutrition book, also available on DVD.

What's Hot

1st Washington State Traumatic Brain Injury Conference



Presented by the Washington State Department of Social & Health Services and the Washington State Traumatic Brain Injury Strategic Partnership Advisory Council the 1st Washington State Traumatic Brain Injury Conference put traumatic brain injury on the map in Washington State.

The conference provided opportunities for survivors of Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI), caregivers, advocates, and TBI professionals to increase their understanding of TBI, improve TBI programs, and improve collaborations in Washington State.

TBI Forum Series

The UW Traumatic Brain Injury Model System invites you to join its quarterly information and discussion group.

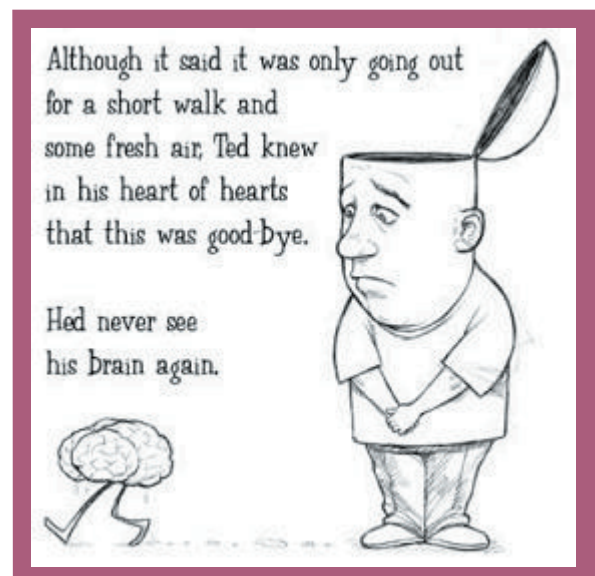
At the most recent forum, "Nutrition to Maximize Health and Wellness After a Brain Injury" Melissa Montalto, MS, RD, CD, a dietician from the University of Washington Medical Center, discussed the role of nutrition in health after a brain injury.

To view the video of the presentation go to www.tbi.washington.edu Click on "TBI Forums" under Educational Materials. Then click on "Nutrition To Maximize Health and Wellness After Brain Injury"

Vitamins and TBI

There are no published scientific studies on whether vitamins increase recovery from TBI. Foods high in choline, a part of the neurotransmitter in the brain important for memory, include eggs, meat, fish, nuts, legumes, and soy. Mega-doses of vitamins may be toxic in some cases. However, some physicians will prescribe the following: vitamin B1, B6, B12, vitamin C, folic acid, or octacosanol with zinc, vitamin C, and B6.

What about diet and the immune system? Again, there have been no scientific studies on persons with TBI and these supplements. There is some suggestion that arginine and glutamine may help out early in hospitalization. However, there are lots of people selling many different expensive dietary supplements with little or no evidence that they help with neurological recovery. Be an informed consumer and consult with your doctor.



by Jeff Gregory

Recreating Me: Exploring & Healing through Artistic Expression

Presented By:

The University of Washington Traumatic Brain Injury Model System



Lyn Nude in charcoal by Stacy Rosevear

A multi-media display of art created by people after a traumatic brain injury. We are looking forward to the creative entries and a fantastic art show.

Please join us.

Wednesday, July 22nd, 2009, 5-8pm
UW South Campus Center.

For more information or to **Volunteer** contact Heather Porter at 206-221-6441 (hporter@u.washington.edu) For driving and parking directions, call Aaron Scrol 206-616-0334 (ascrol@u.washington.edu) or visit our website at www.tbi.washington.edu.

If you would like to receive this newsletter by email contact us at:

uwtbi@u.washington.edu

Or visit our website at:

www.depts.washington.edu/rehab/tbi/