



BrainCoach

# BRAIN BITES

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## QUESTION - IS YOUR BRAIN AGING?

The answer is not because of a single phenomenon or a single process. There are many theories about brain aging. However, here is a simplified overview of the main dilemma.

After age 30, the brain begins to shrink. The total volume of brain tissue slowly decreases with daily wear and tear. There is a reduction in the number of brain cells called neurons. You literally have billions of neurons in your brain. There is enough to last your whole lifetime. But, the problem is how they change over time. Connections between them are very important to maintain. Losing the connectors between these cells is the real problem. As well, the covering around the neurons can deteriorate. These are the reasons for the decrease in brain volume, which occurs with normal aging.

When this deterioration occurs, the electrical activity of the brain slows down. The signals between neurons get slower and slower. One very noticeable result is that, with advancing age, paying attention becomes harder. The filters that block out sensory noise and constant stimulation begin to falter. The brain has to deal with more distractions and registers more confusion, thus making it harder to stay on task.

The brain produces less neurotransmitters (chemicals) as we age. This sometimes accounts for why people get more irritable and grumpy with age. As well, genetics play a significant role for some people. How well you age can depend on your genes. Finally, if your body is healthy, your brain is healthy. If your body is sick, then your brain is likely to be sick too. The brain is not isolated from the body. A deterioration in bodily health means deterioration in brainpower too.

## AGING BRAINS

As you age, it is obvious that the brain has fewer resources. Perhaps the major player in brain aging is a lack of blood flow to the brain. Less oxygen is getting to the neurons. This also means that the waste products can't be carried away. Without a constant supply of oxygen, brain aging and disease are sure to come.

The older you are the more valuable your brain is. If some of the aging signs are part of your life, realize that they can lead to more serious problems. Accelerated brain aging leaves your brain vulnerable to more serious neurological diseases.

It is true that the aging brain does slow down naturally. But, neuroscientists are now saying that you can control your own destiny more than you think. The brain's neurons have to be supported by an intelligent life style. They need to be cared for if you expect them to work well for you. They need to be protected and nurtured if you want to maintain a high quality of life as you age. Your brain does not have to succumb to the ravages of time. Your brainpower does not have to decrease as the years go by. You can stay mentally sharp as you age.

**WHAT IS YOUR  
BRAIN WORTH TO  
YOU!!**