

Steve Franks Director OC Community Resources

> Ryan Drabek Interim Director OC Animal Care

Karen Roper Director OC Community Services

> Mark Denny Director OC Parks

Helen Fried County Librarian OC Public Libraries

March 2010

A Healthy Brain is a Happy Brain Free Alzheimer's Disease Information Available

By: Ivy Lee

Erin Ulibarri, MPH

It's the brain's moment to shine! In honor of Brain Awareness Week (March 15-21), the Office on Aging is promoting Alzheimer's disease awareness. It is no secret that Alzheimer's disease greatly impacts our county. In 2008 alone, over 46,000 Orange County older adults had Alzheimer's. By the year 2030, that number is expected to increase by 99% (Alzheimer's Association California Alzheimer's Disease Data Report, 2009).

While the exact causes of the disease are unknown, research suggests that there are many **simple** things you can do to help prevent or delay Alzheimer's disease:

- 1. **Maintain a brain-healthy diet**. Eat plenty of cold water fish (especially Omega 3-rich salmon and trout), nuts, whole grains, berries, and leafy greens each week.
- 2. **Stay socially & mentally active**. Volunteer, join clubs (bridge, square dancing, hiking), read, write, and solve riddles and puzzles to stimulate the body and mind.
- 3. **Avoid tobacco & excess alcohol**. These toxins not only increase your chances of developing Alzheimer's, they also increase the chances of developing it at an earlier age (www.helpguide.org).
- 4. **Exercise**. Moderate exercise on a regular basis (at least 30 minutes five times a week) keeps the blood flowing and is essential for your brain health.

Being aware of the facts surrounding this disease is an important part of healthy aging. The Orange County Office on Aging is now offering free Alzheimer's disease education packets containing information on medication options and legal/financial planning for those with, or who are at risk for, Alzheimer's disease. For a free packet and/or a referral, call **1-800-510-2020** or **1-714-567-7500**.

Give your brain the credit it deserves. Call now.



