

WELLNEWS



## Smoke gets in your mind

[By Scott LaFee]

Long-term, excessive exposure to secondhand tobacco smoke increases the risk of developing dementia, report researchers.

A study of 3,602 people age 65 and older found that a high lifetime exposure to secondhand smoke increased the likelihood of developing dementia by roughly 30%. High exposure was defined as more than 30 years of exposure to secondhand smoke.

The Cardiovascular Health Study also found a greater occurrence of dementia in people who had not been diagnosed with cardiovascular disease.

"This is one of the first studies to look at the risk of dementia in people who never smoked but were exposed to secondhand smoke," University of California Berkeley neuroscientist Thaddeus Haight said. "These results show that secondhand smoke is associated with increased risk of dementia, even in people without known risk factors for dementia related to diagnosed cardiovascular disease."

### MEDTRONICA

Body Positive - [www.bodypositive.com](http://www.bodypositive.com)

This Web site is aimed at people (primarily women) who have a poor self-image in terms of their body shape and weight. Sections offer tips on when and how to diet, how to survive in a weight-obsessed culture.

### PAIN IN THE POCKETBOOK

Maybe this shouldn't be surprising:

Scientists say people process information about financial loss through the same neural mechanisms used to process physical pain.

### BODY OF KNOWLEDGE

The length from your wrist to your elbow is the same as the length of your foot.

### GET ME THAT. STAT!

Nearly 2 million Americans each year experience a serious adverse drug reaction when using marketed drugs; and 100,000 die.

### NEVER SAY DIET

The world's record for the consumption of cow brains is 57 (18 pounds) in 10 minutes.

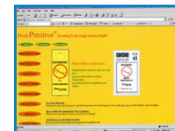
### COLD COMFORT

If you're temporarily down with an upper respiratory infection, otherwise known as a common cold, here are some numbers to noodle: Adults on average catch two to four colds each year; children catch six to 10. This results in roughly 180 million school days missed by children with colds and 196 million workdays missed by adults.

Each year, Americans make 110 million visits to the doctor for cold-related ailments. They spend \$1.1 billion on antibiotics. The number of antibiotics that have any effect upon the 110 known rhinoviruses that cause colds is zero.

### STORIES FOR THE WAITING ROOM

Guido Lanfranc was a 15th-century surgeon with a musical method for detecting skull fractures. He would ask a patient to bite down on the end of a violin string, then pull it taut and pluck it. If the resulting note was sharp and clear, the skull was fine. If the note was fuzzy, the skull was broken.



### PHOBIA OF THE WEEK

Aulophobia - fear of flutes

### BEST MEDICINE

Things you don't want to hear from your doctor: "I'd tell you what your condition is, but I'm not sure how to pronounce it."

### OBSERVATION

I was taken to the hospital for observation. I stayed several days, didn't observe anything, and left.

- George Carlin

### CURTAIN CALLS

In 2004, Al Dvorin, the longtime announcer at Elvis Presley concerts who coined the

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phrase "Elvis has left the building," died in an automobile accident. He was on his way home from a convention of Elvis impersonators.

**WORKING OUT AND BREAST CANCER**

Working out seems to protect against breast cancer, and the reason may be the hormone melatonin. Canadian researchers found that

the longer a woman exercised, no matter what the intensity, the higher her melatonin levels rose. Melatonin appears to slow cancer growth and increase immunity in addition to making us sleep better.

**PARENTAL INFLUENCE**

Parents have a great deal of influence over whether their kids grow into overweight

or obese young adults. Researchers from Arizona State University found that children between the ages of 12 and 19 whose parents don't actively discourage bad eating habits or monitor television viewing time are significantly more likely to grow up overweight.

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