

The Listening Post



Missouri Hearing Society

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President's Message

Since Thanksgiving is right around the corner, why not begin there? Being grateful.

I am grateful for the special strength and standing of MHS. Meaning, for you! We are an able-bodied agent in all the issues of doing business in hearing healthcare in Missouri. And MHS is in various quarters recognized for its solidity and consequence.

It is a fact that MHS ranks well among the state organizations, with a higher membership count than the national average and with many fewer organizational concerns. Read: with built-in peace and sustained forward movement.

With such ballast we now head toward convention in March in St. Louis.

As we speak, a wonderful roster of speakers is coming together, and our exhibitors are beginning to line up. So, mark your new 2020 calendar for March 5-7 (Thursday-Saturday) at the Frontenac Hilton and join us there, expecting just that cutting-edge content and excellent presentation we have become accustomed to at our MHS events. And bring someone else along. Add to the success!

The CEUs are certainly essential – and welcome – for all of us, but I wonder if perhaps it isn't the networking and the importance of meeting each other that, in the end, gives us an actual reason for attending.

Thank you for your interest, for your loyalty and for your continued focus on professional excellence.

But take time out for the holidays!

Cordially,
 Yon



*Yon Wibskov
 2019-20 MHS President*



It's Time to Renew Your Support!

What does your membership give you?

Legislative Issues Monitored



Your membership funds are part of the resources we draw upon to ensure a good business environment for all dispensing professionals. Each year the MHS Board and Staff review the legislation in progress, determining what will affect either our ability to practice or the methods by which we practice. Often this can be done behind the scenes, but sometimes it requires greater effort. Being able to boast a significant membership carries weight when talking with elected officials. Your membership DOES make a difference!

Credibility



Proudly displaying your MHS membership certificate helps build confidence and credibility with your patients. They know you adhere to an agreed upon standard of professional behavior by participating in a statewide association. Consumers can and do contact the MHS office in Jefferson City, seeking for referrals to dispensing professionals.

Personal Growth Benefits



The MHS Newsletter is packed with vital information on developing issues as well as tried-and-true topics. Industry leaders support the MHS Newsletter by providing tailored articles and advertising. As a member you may also place a FREE classified ad.

CEU Opportunities



You can count on a yearly exemplary educational program. MHS has one of the strongest and most current offerings in the nation. Attend the annual conference, and you'll garner all the CEUs necessary for your annual requirement at a member discount. You will meet a wide variety of vendors to discuss how to strengthen your practice offerings and equipment. It's an efficient use of your time away from the office.

Website Resources



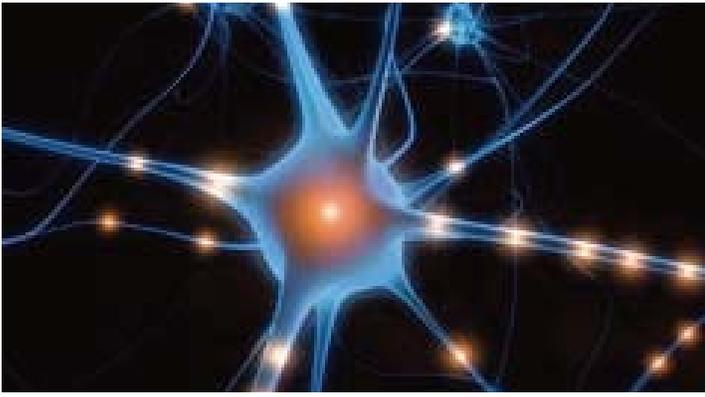
Our website is loaded with information links for both professionals like yourself and consumers like those you see in your office.

You can research past newsletters, find a pertinent phone number for licensing questions, refer a patient to a link for more data on how ears and hearing function, and more. It is wonderfully representative of the Society and the professions, presenting a united image of all dispensing professionals as part of a team concerned for the hearing well-being of the individuals we service.

(www.missourihearingsociety.org)

***Invest in your industry
by renewing your
membership in MHS today!***

For your convenience, you can pay your dues online by credit card by clicking the "Join MHS" tab at www.missourihearingsociety.org.



Taking Care of Your Brain

by Lori Vaughn

It is a well-known fact that proper diet and exercise is good for our body. It helps keep us limber as we age. A fact that tends to be overlooked is that proper diet and exercise also nourishes our brains.

We all want to keep our brains healthy as we age. And, because we can't make our brains do sit-ups or have them run a mile, the next best thing we can do for them is feed them a healthy diet.

According to *Medical News Today*¹, there are several sources to help with that goal: oily fish, dark chocolate, berries, nuts and seeds, whole grains, coffee, avocados, peanuts, eggs, broccoli, kale, soy, and supplements. These sources contain a variety of nutrients that are known to have a healthy impact on our bodies.

Oily fish, such as salmon and tuna, provides Omega-3 nutrients which are known to increase blood flow in the brain. Several of the items listed above contain antioxidants which are known to reduce inflammation.

Dark chocolate and berries contain flavonoids, a type of antioxidant that may encourage neuron and blood vessel growth in parts of the brain involved in memory and learning. Nuts, seeds, and whole grains contain Vitamin E which may contribute to improved cognition.

Although coffee is not recommended for everyone, it is also a source of antioxidants.

Avocados are a source of healthy unsaturated fat which may reduce blood pressure. Eggs contain B vitamins which may postpone cognitive decline.

Not only is broccoli rich in fiber and healthy nutrients, which can provide a positive effect on the brain, but other vegetable options also

include cabbage, cauliflower and kale. Some people also take supplements such as vitamin B, C, or E in addition to choosing healthy dietary options.

Of course, there are medical factors that we can't control when seeking to prevent a mental decline. However, by taking steps, we can at least give ourselves a better chance of not suffering from this type of disease.

We all know that it's easy to lose focus on following these guidelines. Life is busy with many other things that fill our time. However, if you work at it every day, even if by just starting out with a few minutes each day, good habits can be integrated into your daily routine. You will no doubt feel better and stronger every day both in mind and body.



¹ See complete article at <https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/324044.php>.

Additional Learning:

For an article providing additional information on steps to take to be take care of your brain, go to <https://www.helpguide.org/articles/alzheimers-dementia-aging/preventing-alzheimers-disease.htm>. This article goes into detail about the "6 Pillars of Alzheimer's Prevention" including regular exercise, social engagement, healthy diet, mental stimulation, quality sleep, and stress management.

About the Author:

Lori Vaughn is a freelance writer who loves creating memes and working in social media.



Prevent Data Theft By Adopting Security Protocols

by Kathy-Jo Facteau, BC-HIS

HIPAA violations, cyber crimes, and employee data theft can strike any size of business. Working, as hearing professionals do, with sensitive information affecting hundreds of patients, security measures should be a part of one's company manual and an ongoing effort.

A basic step to take is to secure sensitive data whether it relates to a patient or an employee. Whether you are using paper files, flash drives, or external hard drives, any removable storage device or file should be stored in a locked cabinet or other secure storage container when not in use. Only those who have a need to know should be allowed access to these sensitive files. Restrict employee access to data to the information they need to do their job and no more.

Once information is no longer needed, be sure to shred any paper documents prior to disposal. If a computer or electronic storage device is being recycled or thrown out, be sure to remove all data from it, using a computer cleaning program that allows one to write over the hard drive, making data harder to restore.

Password protection, thumbprint recognition and even face recognition can secure all of one's electronic devices from desktop computers to smart phones as well as your portal accesses, office management system, and other vital accounts. Each employee should have their own unique user name and a strong password that is changed frequently. Longer passwords are harder to crack. An easy way to create a longer password is to string a series of short words together with numbers and other characters interspersed. A password protection program such as LastPass, which maintains passwords for all accounts accessed online, may be suitable

and streamline the password maintenance procedures.

By creating user accounts for each employee, you can prevent unauthorized use of business computers. If an area, such as reception, is located in a public space, limit what that computer can access in your network. Any laptops should be locked in place or otherwise secured when unattended. Laptops are easy to pick up and may be carted out the door unobserved.

To protect the security of the files on the computer and enhance privacy, use encryption. This can be done on a file by file basis or through a program that encrypts the whole hard drive. Add encryption to smart phones, laptops, flash drives and backup devices, in addition to the stationary office computers. Many email programs offer easy encryption, allowing secure and private transmission. Use this feature for all sensitive information sent via email.

Installing antivirus and antispy software is an established method of protecting one's business computers. If you don't know an email is from a trusted source, don't open it. Keep your antivirus and malware programs up to date and routinely scan your computers for infections. Caught early, problems can often be contained.

All computers will be using various programs from the operating systems to the antivirus software to the business-specific programs. Be sure to keep these updated, installing the latest patches. These patches often pinpoint and repair security vulnerabilities. Being up-to-date is an important first line of defense.

If a workplace wi-fi network is in use, establish a password for access. If it is encrypted, secure,

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Prevent Data Theft *(from page 4)*

and hidden so that the network name can't be picked up by the public, the network security will be greatly enhanced. When you enable the operating system's firewall or install a purchased firewall program, you'll prevent intruders from gaining access to your network. Free security software may not be as effective as a program purchased from a reputable company and have at times been carriers for unwanted features that can infect your network.

A Virtual Private Network (VPN) adds another measure of security as it masks one's IP address and location. For those not sure how to configure the VPN, hire a professional or purchase a pre-configured router.

Training employees in computer security and sensitive data protection is a major aspect of one's office security protocols. It's vital

to document company security policies and practices. Add these to the training manuals and ensure all employees receive copies of established and newly created policies and procedures for protecting sensitive information. Reviewing these protocols routinely will help one spot gaps or areas where improvements can be made as security tools are developed by others. Refreshing workers on protocols and retraining them on updates should be an ongoing activity.

Cyber attacks and security breaches lurk in the day-to-day engagement of office computers and supportive electronic devices. Take measures today to ensure you are not an easy mark. Those measures could discourage those who would compromise your business by stealing its data.

