

Board Games May Stave Off Cognitive Decline

Games aren't just fun; they can keep our minds agile and sharp. At least this seems to be the main takeaway of a host of recent studies that point to the cognitive benefits of video games.

For instance, some researchers have suggested that just 1 hour of gaming can improve attention, and some studies have shown that games that involve shooting, in particular, can improve cognition.

When it comes to older adults, the benefits of computer games seem to be even greater. From brain training apps that may prevent mild cognitive impairment to 3D video games that may reverse age-related cognitive decline, playing games on a computer seems to offer many benefits.

But what about analog games? Is it just computer games that benefit the brain health of older adults, or can non-digital games, such as cards, board games, or crossword puzzles, also affect cognition?

Researchers at the University of Edinburgh in the United Kingdom set out to investigate.

Drew Altschul, from the School of Philosophy, Psychology, and Language Sciences, co-authored the new paper together with Professor Ian Deary, who is the director of the Edinburgh Lothian Birth Cohorts. The study appears in *The Journals of Gerontology*.

Studying non-digital games and cognition

Altschul and Deary examined 1,091 participants who

were born in 1936 and whose data they accessed from the Lothian Birth Cohort 1936 — a study that evaluated the mental and cognitive capacities of its participants over a long period.

Researchers first assessed the participants' cognitive function when they were 11 years old, and then later on at ages 70, 73, 76, and 79 using 14 standardized cognitive tests.

As part of the new study, the scientists asked the participants how often they played board games, cards, chess, bingo, or crosswords at ages 70 and 76.



As part of their statistical analysis, the researchers accounted for possible confounding factors, such as “early-life cognitive function, education, social class, sex, activity levels, and health issues.”

The analysis found that people who played more games in their 70s were more likely

to maintain healthy cognitive function in their older years.

Play games to reduce cognitive decline

Specifically, those who reported playing more analog games in their 70s experienced less relative cognitive decline from the age of 11 until 70, and less cognitive decline between 70 and 79.

“These latest findings add to evidence that being more engaged in activities during the life course might be associated with better thinking skills in later life,” comments Altschul.

Board Games May Stave off Cognitive Decline (continued)

The co-author also thinks it is possible to interpret the results as a nudge to start playing some games in order to prevent cognitive decline.

“For those in their 70s or beyond, another message seems to be that playing non-digital games may be a positive behavior in terms of reducing cognitive decline,” Drew Altschul said.

Prof. Deary also comments on the significance of the results, echoing similar sentiments. “We and others are narrowing down the sorts of activities that might help to keep people sharp in older age,” he says.



and social activity, it seems; it is something in this group of games that has this small but detectable association with better cognitive aging.”

The author also highlights directions for future research: “It would be good to find out if some of these games are more potent than others. We also point out that several other things are related to better cognitive aging, such as being physically fit and not smoking,” concludes Prof. Deary.

“In our Lothian sample, it is not just general intellectual

Article courtesy of www.medicalnewstoday.com.



Christmas In Color

Watch in awe as 1.5 million Christmas lights dance around you to some of your favorite holiday tunes. This family friendly event at Bandimere Speedway runs thru Jan 4th from 5:30 pm - 10:30 pm. Price is \$27 per vehicle.

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Santa's Village at Chatfield Farms

Hop on the hayride to visit a giant snow globe, meet Santa's reindeer, or walk under the magical light displays in Santa's village. So many activities await at this family friendly event. Ticket prices and times vary. Visit www.botanicgardens.org for more details.

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Ingredients

- 2 cups flour
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1 Tb baking powder
- 1/4 tsp salt
- 1/4 tsp nutmeg
- 1/2 tsp cinnamon
- 1/2 cup cold butter
- 3/4 cup eggnog
- 2 Tb eggnog

Ingredients

- 1/3 cup powdered sugar
- 2 Tb eggnog

Eggnog Scones:

In a food processor, add all dry ingredients. Blend for 3-5 seconds. Next, add cold butter that has been chopped into small pieces. Blend for 3-4 seconds until well incorporated.

Add 3/4 cup eggnog. Blend until mixture forms together. Remove dough from processor. Knead a few times, blending any flour that didn't mix fully.

Form dough into an 8 inch circle. Cut into 8 wedges. Place each wedge on a baking sheet lined with a silicone mat or parchment paper. Wedges should be spaced 1/2 inch apart.

Brush wedges with additional 2 Tablespoons of eggnog. Bake at 425 for 18-20 minutes. Cool on a baking rack. For the glaze - mix powdered sugar and 8 Tablespoons of eggnog. Drizzle glaze over cooled scones.

Recipe courtesy of www.beyondthechickencoop.com

5 Tips for Better Sleep

Getting enough good-quality sleep is essential for out full concentration.

a person's physical and mental health. Some simple sleep hygiene practices and home remedies can help people sleep better.

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recommend that people aged 18–60 years get 7 or more hours of sleep each night. However, 7–19% of adults in the United States are not getting enough sleep, according to survey results.

Chronic sleep deficiency can increase a person's risk of certain health conditions, including obesity, heart disease, depression, and diabetes. Tiredness can increase the likelihood of injuries, for example, due to drowsy driving or operating heavy machinery with-



In this article, we look at some tips and home remedies for getting a better night's sleep. We also cover when to see a doctor.

Exercise Regularly

Regular exercise offers many health benefits, including a reduced risk of cardiovascular disease, increased muscle tone, and better weight control. Exercising for 20 to 30 minutes during the day can help a person sleep better.

However, people should avoid strenuous physical activity 2–3 hours before going to bed, as this may have the opposite effect.

Limit alcohol at night



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Conifer Christmas Parade!

Enjoy a day filled with holiday trolleys, warm spirits, live entertainment, shopping, Santa Land and more at the 37th annual Conifer Christmas Parade. Admission is free. Activities start at 10:30 am and run until 4:30pm. The parade starts at 2pm. Run starts at 9am.

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A Musical Holiday at Hiwan

Enjoy music, crafts, cookie decorating, light refreshments and general merriment at this Musical Holiday event at Hiwan Dec 12th from 5-7pm. This event is free and all ages are welcome to attend. Hiwan Heritage Park is located at 28473 Meadow Drive in Evergreen.

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Winter Word Search

- Winter
- Snow
- Sled
- Icicle
- Blizzard
- Hot Chocolate
- Cold
- Frosty
- Frozen
- January
- Gloves
- Ice
- Hibernate
- Coat
- Hat

5 Tips for Better Sleep

Although alcohol has a sedative effect that can help a person get to sleep, it can also disrupt sleep patterns and increase the likelihood of a person waking up in the middle of the night. Drinking alcohol before bed may also increase the risk of snoring and sleep apnea.

Maintain a regular bedtime

The human body has a natural sleep-wake cycle. Sleeping and waking up at varying times on different days of the week can disrupt this cycle, which may lead to sleep issues. Where possible, people should try to stick to regular bedtimes and wake up times, including at weekends.

Make the bedroom sleep-friendly

It is important to make the bedroom a comfortable environment for sleeping. A person can do this by:

- keeping the temperature cool (between 60°F -70°F)
- removing devices that emit noise or light

- using blackout curtains

Take time to wind down

Unwinding before going to bed can help a person get a better night's sleep. Relaxing activities can include:

- practicing meditation or gentle yoga
- reading a book
- taking a hot bath or shower
- listening to music

Avoiding the use of screens, such as televisions, phones, and tablets, before bed can also make it easier for a person to relax their mind.

Summary

Getting enough sleep can improve a person's energy levels, performance, safety, and overall health. Practicing good sleep hygiene and making certain lifestyle changes can help people get a better night's sleep.



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Timothy P and the Stocking Stuffers

Back by popular demand, StageDoor Theatre proudly presents Timothy P. & the Rocky Mountain Stocking Stuffers Dec 15th at 7pm for this bluegrass extravaganza! Holiday cheer and loads of fun. Tickets are \$22-25 and are available at www.stagedoortheatre.com.

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Skate the Lake New Year's Eve Party

Celebrate New Year's Eve with the Evergreen Chamber's Skate the Lake event at Evergreen Lake Dec 31st from 6-10pm. This family friendly event features fireworks at 8pm and then open skate under the lights until 10pm. More information available at www.evergreenchamber.org.

Patient Success Story:

“My initial injury began with completely locked neck muscles and no movement with severe pain. During therapy, I could see progressive improvement. In the past I have required several kinds of PT, but Conifer PT presented a most impressive program!

- Sylvia S.

LAUGH OUT LOUD

