



## **The Brain Research Foundation Launches New Initiative To Understand Relationship Between Physical Exercise And Cognitive Functioning**

- **New research to expand on recent science that found path to Alzheimer’s Disease and dementia may be slowed by increased physical activity**

The Brain Research Foundation today announced that it has launched a major research initiative that will support and fund new science that explores the relationship between cognitive decline and exercise. The initiative will include a multi-year research effort that will expand as science and funding dictate. In addition, an education and outreach effort will build upon programming that the Foundation initiated this year.

“This is an exciting step for our Foundation and the community of neuroscientists working on cognitive decline,” stated Terre A. Constantine, Ph.D. and Executive Director of the Brain Research Foundation. “The research completed in this area is not comprehensive, but compelling in that it indicates a positive relationship between increased levels of physical activity actually delaying cognitive decline. Only through the commitment of a long-term Foundation supporter are we able to launch this initiative.”

Recent studies have found that physical activity reduces the risk of dementia and Alzheimer’s by 28% and 45% respectively. Exercise accelerates blood flow throughout the body and brain and people who exercise regularly have been shown to have higher cognitive functioning than those who do not. Some studies suggest that exercise

positively affects not only cognition but also underlying brain structure and activity, and actually increases brain volume.

The Brain Research Foundation will fund new studies to help determine the intensity and duration of exercise needed in order to decrease the risk of cognitive decline. In addition, the Foundation would like to determine the mechanism behind this “protection.” The Foundation has issued a request for proposals to the research community and anticipates that its Scientific Review Committee will review final proposals by year-end.

In addition to funding new research, the initiative will include education and outreach to promote the cognitive benefits of exercise. This past year the Brain Research Foundation conducted a survey to explore peoples’ perceptions of cognitive decline and exercise. The survey results indicated that individuals would be more inclined to exercise if they knew it would delay neurological diseases such as Alzheimer’s or dementia.

Startup for the “Slowing Cognitive Decline” initiative was made possible by a new grant created by a long-time BRF supporter and with additional funding from the Brain Research Foundation. Additional funding would allow the Foundation to expand this important research initiative.

### **About the Brain Research Foundation**

The Brain Research Foundation ([www.theBRF.org](http://www.theBRF.org)) supports cutting-edge neuroscience research that will lead to novel treatments and prevention of all neurological diseases in children and adults. We deliver this commitment through research grants, which provide initial funding for innovative research projects, as well as educational programs for researchers and the general public.