

# Natural Health News

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EVERGREEN SPA & WELLNESS  
ELY, MN

## AGING AND NEURODEGENERATION

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### Retail Store Hours

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There has been a considerable amount of research on the rate of cell turnover. Our cells are constantly being replaced due to the damage they incur. The epidermal layer of our skin gets replaced about every two weeks. Red blood cells live for 120 days. The epithelial cells, which make up the lining of our gut, have a life span of only 5 days. The cells that make up the gut itself, however, have found to have an average age of about 15 years. Researchers are still trying to determine the age of fat cells, bone marrow, and organs like the liver, kidney, and pancreas. Years ago, I was taught that the human body completely renews itself every seven years. The current state of knowledge is limited, but from what is known now, the 7-year renewal idea is obviously incorrect. If I had to guess an average, 15 years would probably be closer. For now, one thing seems to be rather clear: The most common problems associated with aging are directly linked to the degeneration of the nervous system (*neurodegeneration*). It appears that most of our nervous tissue is as old as we are. Our "wiring" needs to remain consistent throughout life so that our coordination skills, visual and other sensory perceptions, intuition, thoughts, etc., remain the same and can be used as a foundation to build upon. It might be difficult for us to survive if the nerves that controlled vital organs and processes were constantly being replaced. You had more brain cells at birth than you'll ever have, and you'll never have any more than you do today. Neurodegeneration is just a part of life. The good news is that you can slow down the degenerative process and lessen the ill effects it has on your overall health and well-being. Most people are doing nothing. The four most common age-related complaints are a lack of energy; brain dysfunction; diabetes; and digestive problems. And just because you're getting older and everyone else seems to be suffering from a particular problem doesn't necessarily mean you have to. Most of these diseases exist because of poor diet and bad habits. Energy is a precious commodity as we get older. Our energy is produced in mitochondria. You can think of mitochondria as small fireplaces that reside in every cell. The fuel comes from the food we eat, and the air we breathe is used to burn the food. Glucose is the only fuel used by the brain and nervous system, but unlike other cells, nerves can't store glucose and they require a constant supply. Simple carbohydrates (such as sugar, corn syrup, white flour, fruit, etc.) are more like an injection of glucose that enter the bloodstream very rapidly, causing a spike in glucose levels. This triggers the release of a heavy dose of insulin, which starts to clear the excess sugar by moving it into cells, where it can be stored as fat and as energy reserve. With the rapid drop in glucose, brain function and nervous system function suffers.

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This energy crisis (called hypoglycemia) leaves us weak, confused, irritable, unable to mentally focus, spaced out, and on the fast track to insulin resistance and type 2 diabetes. Few people, however (doctors included), fully understand the long-term, negative consequences these fluctuations can have on the nerves and the organs they help control. Poor blood glucose control is one of the primary causes of neurodegeneration. The vagus nerve is a part of the sympathetic nervous system and is the longest of the cranial nerves. It originates in the brain, and supplies all the organs except the adrenal glands. The vagus nerve is also a key component in controlling blood sugar levels. Chronically high blood sugar levels damage the vagus nerve and lead to insulin resistance and diabetes. Studies have demonstrated that whenever stimuli from the vagus nerve are blocked, vitamin B12 deficiencies develop. The vagus nerve controls the release of acid and a protein called the intrinsic factor from the stomach cells. The intrinsic factor is necessary to metabolize B12 from food. Vitamin B12 is necessary to make oxygen-carrying red blood cells. B12 deficiencies are the most common deficiency among the elderly and are associated with dementia, depression and schizophrenia. Adequate stomach acid is also required for proper absorption and assimilation of iron, zinc, calcium, vitamin B and protein. You can slow down neurodegeneration by getting your blood sugar under control. Consuming sugar, artificial sweeteners, white flour, and other refined carbohydrates destroys your nervous system. You can improve the delivery of oxygen to the mitochondria by taking deep breaths and exercising. Many of the pesticides in use today work by destroying the nervous system of insects and other pests. It does the same thing to humans, only at a slower pace. Avoid toxins and fix your gut. Your gut is your "second brain". It has its own nervous system which is connected to your cranial brain through the vagus nerve. Problems in your gut (stomach and intestines) can create havoc in your central nervous system. Inflammation is a constant drain on the resources of the nervous system and your immune system. Eating a diet of whole foods will protect our energy-producing fireplaces, the mitochondria. To ensure optimal health with proper nutrition, call me to make your appointment for a Nutritional Exam & Complete Health Evaluation.

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Kalona Super Natural—Greek Yogurt, 5 oz.	30% OFF
Dancing Deer—Gingerbread Cookie Mix, 16 oz.	25% OFF
Doctor Kracker—Culinary Crisps, 6 oz.	30% OFF
Enjoy Life—GF Snickerdoodle Cookies, 6 oz.	25% OFF
Good Health—Rosemary or Sea Salt Olive Oil Chips	25% OFF
King Arthur—G/F Almond or Coconut Flour, 16 oz.	25% OFF
Mestemacher—Three Grain Bread, 17.6 oz.	25% OFF
Orchard Valley Harvest—Variety Trail Mix, 4 oz.	30% OFF
Ritter—Milk Chocolate Hazelnut, 3.5 oz.	25% OFF
WaiLana—Cassava Chips, 3 oz., variety	30% OFF
Ziggy Marley—Coconut Oil Blends, 1 oz. pouches	25% OFF
Dry Soda—Natural Sodas, 4-pack variety	30% OFF
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