

IMPACT

**Identify Mechanisms to Preserve Agility in
Cognition and Thinking**

STU00220054

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From the
ABC Lab
at Northwestern
Memorial Hospital

Fall 2025 Newsletter

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Recruitment Update

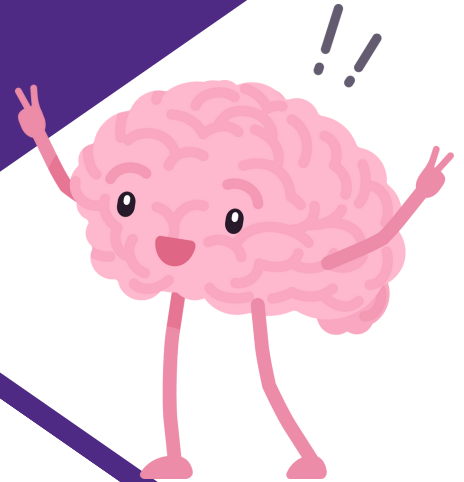
G o a l

2,000

P a r t i c i p a n t s

729

Want to Make an IMPACT with Us?



- **Become an IMPACT study participant.**

Help improve our understanding of brain health. Your data can help prevent brain-related conditions, like dementia and stroke.

- **Refer others** to become IMPACT study participants.

People who you refer should:

- Be over 50 years old
- Have had a brain MRI
- Call, text or email:
 - **(312) 612-0316**
 - **ABCLab@northwestern.edu**

- Attend **one study visit now,** and one in **2 years.**

- Each visit is 5 hours long.

- **Minimally invasive tests:**

- Blood draw
- MRI
- Ultrasound
- Walking test
- Memory and thinking games

- Be compensated for your time up to \$650.

Brain Health Tip:

Physical Activity

Decades of research show that being physically active is good for the brain. Individuals who are more physically active have a slower rate of thinking and memory decline.

A recent study may show us what level of physical activity is best for the brain. The study involved over 2500 individuals with nine years of physical activity data starting in middle age. Over nine years, middle-aged and older adults who combined frequent light physical activity with infrequent moderate-to-vigorous physical activity experienced the lowest rate of thinking and memory decline.

So, what should you to do to help your brain?

1. Avoid being inactive.
2. Engage in light physical activity daily.
3. Engage in moderate-to-vigorous physical activity at least once per week or several times per month.

Scan the QR code below to learn more about the physical activity study.



What Should I Do to Be Physically Active? & How Often?

Light Physical Activity

- Easy walking
- Light housework
- Fishing

Every
day



Moderate Physical Activity

- Brisk walking
- Low impact aerobics

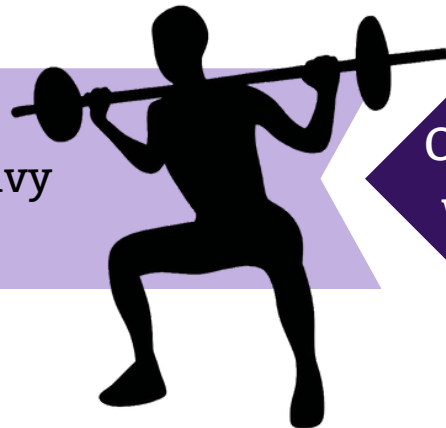
Once a
week



Vigorous Physical Activity

- Running
- Lifting heavy
objects

Once a
week

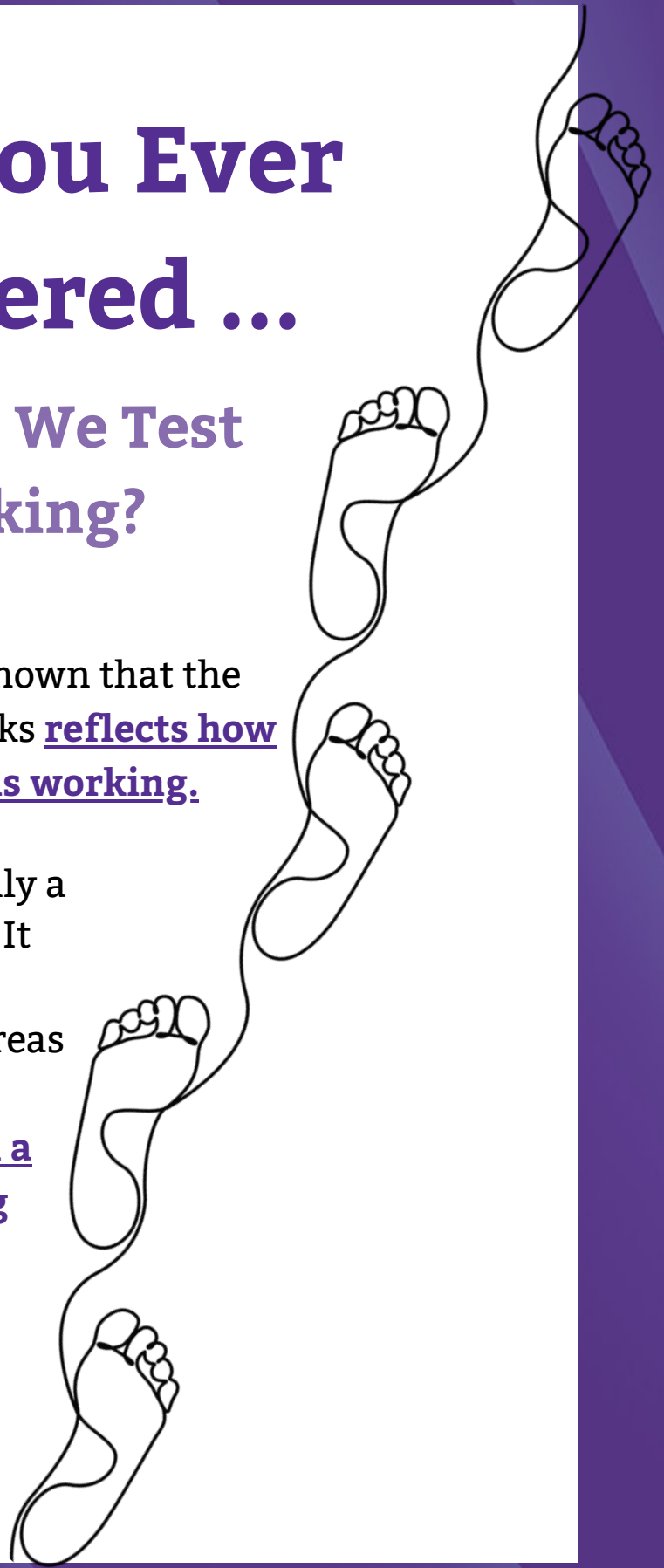


Have You Ever Wondered ...

Why Do We Test Walking?

Studies have shown that the way a person walks reflects how well their brain is working.

Walking is not only a physical activity. It requires many different brain areas to work together. Small changes in a person's walking pattern often happen before memory loss becomes obvious.





A "Brain Stress Test"

Walking while doing another activity that requires thinking can act as a "brain stress test".

A healthy person can walk and perform thinking activities at the same time with little change in their walking pattern.

However, when a person with thinking or memory issues tries to walk and perform thinking activities at the same time, their brain struggles. A person with thinking or memory issues tends to slow down, become unsteady, or make more errors on the thinking activities.

Therefore, walking problems can be early risk signs for cognitive decline and dementia.

Meet Our Principal Investigator



"I'm most inspired when I'm working with participants. Every one moves us closer to a future where healthy brains stay healthy longer."

Dr. Farzaneh Sorond, MD, PhD (she/her)

Vascular Neurologist & Brain Health Researcher

Dr. Sorond's passion for research began early in her career. During her training at Harvard Medical School, she saw how devastating injuries like stroke and memory loss affected patients and their families, and knew this was where she wanted to make an impact.

Today, she is nationally recognized for her pioneering work on how blood vessel health shapes memory, thinking, and aging. Her research combines brain imaging with measures of brain vascular function and health, with the goals of preventing stroke, slowing vascular cognitive decline, and helping people enjoy healthier, longer lives.

In her free time, Dr. Sorond loves flowers and creating unique arrangements for friends and family. She and her husband are proud parents to their son, who has just graduated from college, and their four-year-old golden doodle, Tatum (named after NBA star Jason Tatum).

Dr. Sorond is excited to welcome you to the IMPACT study. She looks forward to working with you to find new ways to protect brain health for generations to come.



We'd love your feedback!

If you have any feedback
on your visit(s) or this
newsletter, please email
ABCLab@northwestern.edu
or call [\(312\) 612-0316](tel:3126120316).

Learn more about our study
and how you can get involved on
[our website:](#)



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