

## Introducing the Healthy Brain Initiative of Southwest Florida

*The Healthy Brain Initiative of Southwest Florida is a community-wide program spearheaded by Lee Memory Care, which is part of Lee Memorial Health System's Older Adult Services department. The Healthy Brain Initiative is a program for adults ages 40 and older and is not intended for those diagnosed with memory loss or signs of memory loss.*

The Healthy Brain Initiative of Southwest Florida is based on a four-week program developed by the UCLA Center for Aging. The program provides scientifically research-based techniques and exercises to help adults ages 40 and older improve their cognitive function and memory power.

Participants learn new and challenging ways to engage their brains, strategies necessary in the development of "brain calisthenics" and options

for daily routines that enhance mind and body coordination.

In addition to the four-week course, participants can also take advantage of Lee Memorial Health System's Brain Spa, which incorporates computer programs into the HBI program, and Memory Boot Camp, which combines nutrition, physical fitness and cognitive function for maximum brain boosting power.

For general information:  
Healthy Brain Initiative  
[www.healthybrainfl.org](http://www.healthybrainfl.org)

## Healthy Brain Initiative of Southwest Florida

For more specific information:  
Sue Maxwell, MSW  
System Director of Gerontology  
Lee Memorial Health System  
239-343-2768

[Sue.Maxwell@LeeMemorial.org](mailto:Sue.Maxwell@LeeMemorial.org)



### 2008-2010 Report



"I learned the framework on which to build ways to remember, like putting things in categories. I know that I will take care of myself as long as I possibly can," says Lois Cyphert, 76, a resident of Lee County, who believes the Healthy Brain Initiative of Southwest Florida helped her maintain her independence.



*Presented by Lee Memorial Health System  
Older Adult Services*

Helping more than 4,000 Southwest Floridians exercise their brains and improve their memories!

**LEE MEMORIAL  
HEALTH SYSTEM**

## The Proof is in the Numbers

*The Healthy Brain Initiative of Southwest Florida works!*



## Healthy Brain Initiative Milestones

*Lee Memory Care, a part of Lee Memorial Health System's Older Adult Services department, has taken several steps during the last two years to ensure the success of the Healthy Brain Initiative of Southwest Florida:*

- January 2008** Signed license agreement with UCLA Center on Aging to use their materials for Healthy Brain Initiative courses.
- March 2008** Launched five HBI pilot programs at health system's hospitals.
- June 2008** Received grant from Collier Family Foundation, a portion of which helped fund HBI. Held first chronic care memory pilot for Parkinson's patients and family members.
- October 2008** Held first training for more than 50 HBI coaches in Lee County.
- January 2009** Launched first classes for the general public, with about 2,000 participants in the first round. Added classes and locations throughout 2009 in Lee and Collier counties.
- March 2009** Assembled first community-wide Steering Committee to collaborate with other agencies and organizations.
- April 2009** Gave first regional presentation about HBI at the Southern Gerontological Society Conference.
- June 2009** Developed first Brain Spa incorporating computer programs into HBI at health system's The Wellness Center.
- January 2010** Launched Website for HBI participants to register online—more than 1,000 hits the first month!
- February 2010** Visited by Gary Small, M.D., who developed program materials at the UCLA Center on Aging. Dr. Small provided special training to enhance coaches' teaching techniques.
- August 2010** Held first Memory Boot Camp encompassing nutrition, exercise and mindfulness. \*Will be showcased at the 2010 Florida Conference on Aging.

## The Importance of Boosting Brain Power

**Every 72 seconds, someone in the United States is diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease.**

**The U.S. can expect a 63 percent increase in the number of Alzheimer's disease cases in the next 20 years, according to the National Institute of Health. The incidence of Alzheimer's is higher in African American and Hispanic populations.**

**About one in seven Americans age 71 and older is currently living with dementia but has not been diagnosed.**

What does this mean for Southwest Florida? Approximately 30 percent of residents in Southwest Florida are 60 or older, which could translate into higher incidences of Alzheimer's disease. This could result in higher health care costs and an even more strained health care system.

Research from the National Institute of Health's Cognitive and Emotional Health Project shows that physical exercise keeps the brain healthy, in addition to improving cardiac health.

It is time for communities to take a proactive approach to memory loss and decreasing brain function. It is time to give our brains a workout with the Healthy Brain Initiative of Southwest Florida, which uses tried and true strategies to improve brain function and memory retention. More than 4,000 Southwest Floridians have participated in the program since its inception in 2008!

**This does not have to be the future of Southwest Florida.**

**Memory loss is not an inevitable consequence of aging, and scientific evidence proves that cognitive exercise can at least delay the onset of Alzheimer's disease.**



**Average age:  
75 years**

**74 percent female,  
26 percent male.**

The HBI uses four measures of success, all of which showed clear improvement for participants of the pilot programs:

**Memory Checks** involve learning 10 words in one minute and then checking word recall after 20 minutes. Three Memory Checks were administered during each pilot program. Participants recalled an average of 5.8 words during the first Memory Check and 8.0 words during the third.

**The Memory Awareness Questionnaire** is a self-reported questionnaire distributed to all participants, who took pre- and post-program tests to

assess their memories. Participants reported an 88.3 percent improvement in their memories by the end of the course.

**The Satisfaction Survey** indicated that 88.9 percent of participants would recommend the HBI to another person.

**The Follow-up Survey** was distributed six months after the end of the pilot programs.

Out of the 72.2 percent of participants who responded, 82 percent stated they still use the skills they learned—proving the HBI has lasting effects!