00:00:00:03 - 00:00:05:14
Tracy LeBlanc
Welcome to Independent Perspective, a public affairs presentation of Western York independent living.

00:00:05:16 - 00:00:10:17
Tracy LeBlanc
I'm your host, Tracy LeBlanc, chief community engagement officer at Western York Independent Living.

00:00:10:23 - 00:00:22:22
Tracy LeBlanc
The US Pointer study is a landmark two-year clinical trial led by the Alzheimer's Association that evaluated whether healthy lifestyle changes can protect brain function in older adults.

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Tracy LeBlanc
Joining us today to provide insights from the study and the benefits of building

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Tracy LeBlanc
brain healthy habits is the Alzheimer's Association Program Manager, Kailea Lalka.

00:00:33:03 - 00:00:36:17
Tracy LeBlanc
Welcome to the show, Kailea.
Thank you for having me.

00:00:36:19 - 00:00:53:24
Tracy LeBlanc
Kailea, can you provide us with a general overview of what the US Poynter study is and what the results were?
Kailea Lalka
Definitely. So the US Pointer study was a two year study conducted by the Alzheimer's Association with some really incredible funders.

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Kailea Lalka

To check what our lifestyle factors can do to our brains. And so this to your study was, conducted with about 2000 participants, and there were two groups, in this study, there was a structured group and then a non structured group. And this study looked at four specific components of our overall health. First being physical exercise.

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Kailea Lalka
Second being heart healthy diet specifically the mind diet and and cognitive functioning. So challenging our brain specifically they use computer programs in this study and then health monitoring. So weight lab test like cholesterol blood sugar and monitoring our blood pressure. The structured group was basically told what to do every day. They met regularly to kind of go over the, the, the, every day of it and the structure of it.

00:01:51:00 - 00:02:24:17
Kailea Lalka
And then the non structured group was given the information and they only met about six times throughout the study to kind of check in and make sure everyone's doing what they're supposed to be doing. At the end of this two year study, we saw that both groups did have an improvement in their overall brain health. However, the structured group, the group who, paid more attention and was more focused and more consistent with these lifestyle factors, showed even better results of a younger, healthier brain, and lowered their risk of cognitive decline.

00:02:24:19 - 00:02:36:13
Kailea Lalka
So the folks that were included in this test had some sort of, cognitive decline, family history. Or maybe we're already showing some symptoms of, cognitive decline.

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Tracy LeBlanc
Great.

00:02:37:04 - 00:02:47:21
Tracy LeBlanc
The study was focused on brain health as we age. Can you tell us what brain health is and why it's important as we get older?
Kailea Lalka

Yeah. So brain health is so important for anybody.

00:02:47:23 - 00:02:58:10
Kailea Lalka
We can start thinking about brain health today, no matter how old you are. If you think that you're too old to start thinking about it, that is not true. Anybody at any age can start thinking about brain health.

00:02:58:13 - 00:03:14:22
Kailea Lalka
So there's no real prevention for Alzheimer's disease that we know of, right now. However, with this study, we're able to see that that cognitive decline can slow down or even be held off by including these, these healthy habits.

00:03:14:24 - 00:03:25:19
Kailea Lalka
And there was only four of those healthy habits that were conducted throughout this study. However, we have a comprehensive list of ten healthy habits. The things that we can do every day to keep our brains healthy.

00:03:25:23 - 00:03:28:10
Tracy LeBlanc
Can you provide us with some examples of

00:03:28:10 - 00:03:35:14
Tracy LeBlanc
brain healthy habits?
Kailea Lalka
Yes. So like I mentioned in this study, exercise is really, really good for our brain.

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Kailea Lalka
What's good for our brain is good for our heart. And what's not so good for our heart is going to be not so good for our brains or our heart and our brain are very interconnected. So thinking about heart health two can also really help you with brain health. So exercise a heart healthy diet like the Dash diet Mediterranean diet, the mind diet,

00:03:53:01 - 00:03:54:15

Kailea Lalka
that challenging our brain.

00:03:54:15 - 00:04:20:02
Kailea Lalka
So doing things that are really challenging to us. So playing games, learning a new hobby, learning a language, something like that. It has to be challenging for you. The monitoring our health. Like I also mentioned in that study, sleeping well, getting adequate sleep, protecting our head from falls. Wearing a helmet. If you are exercising, wearing your seatbelt in the car.

00:04:20:04 - 00:04:28:15
Kailea Lalka
Not smoking cigarettes. Cigarettes are very bad for our overall health. And there is a direct, link to that and cognitive decline.

00:04:28:17 - 00:04:38:20
Kailea Lalka
There's a lot of other there's a few other ones that we can really do. The ten Healthy Habits, are on our website, but working towards our brain health. No matter how old you are, can start today.

00:04:38:23 - 00:04:39:07
Tracy LeBlanc
All right.

00:04:39:10 - 00:04:43:24
Tracy LeBlanc
If someone's interested in more information about brain health, where can they get us started?

00:04:44:04 - 00:05:06:00
Kailea Lalka
Right at the Alzheimer's Association. We have a website, ALS. Org or we have a free 24/7 helpline number at (800) 272-3900. We also are constantly teaching classes out in the public and building brain healthy habits. Is our class right now that focuses on these, these lifestyle changes?

00:05:06:04 - 00:05:24:06
Tracy LeBlanc
Great. That's all the time we have for this week. Thank you for joining us, Kaylee. And thank you for tuning in to Independent Perspective, a public affairs presentation of Western New York Independent Living. Today's guest was Kailea Lalka. Program Manager at the Alzheimer's Association, and I have been your host, Tracy LeBlanc.