

LOOKING INTO LIFESTYLE

Want a better memory? Eat Mediterranean diet

A Mediterranean diet can improve your cognitive function, reduce chances of Alzheimer and improve heart conditions, shows a new study. The main foods in the Mediterranean diet (MedDiet) include plant foods, such as leafy greens, fresh fruit and vegetables, cereals, beans, seeds, nuts, and legumes.

The MedDiet is also low in dairy, has minimal use of red meat, and uses olive oil as its major source of fat. The study, published in the journal *Frontiers in Nutrition* the researchers investigated if and how a MedDiet may impact cognitive processes over time.

“The most surprising result was that the positive effects were found in countries around the whole world. So, regardless of being located outside of what is considered the Mediterranean region, the positive cognitive effects of a higher adherence to a MedDiet were similar in all evaluated papers,” said Roy Hardman, researcher at Swineburne University. The



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study revealed that MedDiet had positive effects on attention, language and memory in particular, including improvements in delayed recognition and visual constructs.

The MedDiet offers the opportunity to change some of the modifiable risk factors like reducing inflammatory responses, increasing micronutrients, improving vitamin and mineral imbalances, changing lipid profiles by using olive oils as the main source of dietary fats. Maintaining weight and potentially reducing obesity, improving polyphenols in the blood, improving cellular energy metabolism are some other positives of having

MedDiet.

The researchers also stressed that the study in this area is important due to the expected extensive population aging over the next 20-30 years.

They suggested that the utilisation of a dietary pattern, such as the MedDiet, will be an essential tool to maintain quality of life and reduce the potential social and economic burdens of manifested cognitive declines like dementia. *IANS*

Video games may boost teens' intelligence

While spending hours on Facebook or other social media sites can lead to bad results in school, playing video games may not have such adverse effects. A new study has found that online video games can even sharpen math, science and reading skills in teenagers. The video games could help students to apply and sharpen various skills learned at school.

The findings showed that students who played online games almost every day score 15 points above the average in maths and 17 points above the average in science. “When you play online games you’re solving puzzles to move to the next level and that involves us-



ing some of the general knowledge and skills in maths, reading and science that you’ve been taught

during the day,” said Alberto Posso, Associate Professor at RMIT University in Melbourne, Australia.

However, teenagers who regularly engage in social media sites are more likely to fall in school results, the researchers said. Students who used Facebook or chat every day scored 20 points worse in maths than students who never used social media. “Students who are regularly on social media are, of course, losing time that could be spent on study,” Posso added.

But it may also indicate that they are struggling with maths, reading and science and are going online to socialise instead, the study said. *IANS*

ALIGN YOUR LIFE

Feng Shui and Vaastu

Last four columns I have been focusing on how Feng Shui and Vaastu originated and are currently used in designing the environment around you. Though on surface they both seem similar, if you look deeply you will realise how different they are in application. And so in this last article in the series, I would like to discuss what are the main differences between the two and which one of them is more effective and contemporary.

Vaastu originated in India and has been used for thousands of years to build cities and temples. However it follows fixed rules such as the entrance needs to be in a particular direction and location of water body is also recommended in certain direction. This may not seem like such a big problem but if you think about it, one general rule cannot be applied to the entire population. It’s not specific enough for people with different dates of births. In these modern times, many people are moving away from owning big homes and most people live in apartments. Given the change in living habits, it is not always possible to have main door and water body in the fixed directions suggested as by Vaastu. Therefore on the grounds of flexibility Vaastu fails. Secondly Vaastu does not take into consideration the changing aspect of time. What will be good today will expire tomorrow. Energy within your environment is also dynamic and is constantly changing. After applying the fixed rules, Vaastu does not have any consideration for when to update or modify the changes. And that is the main reason why I prefer to work with Feng Shui to Vaastu.

Flying Star Feng Shui on the other hand takes into consideration the main compass degree of the property and the direction it is facing. It also focuses on changing time and energies. The whole science of Flying Star school of Feng Shui, focuses on identifying the current prosperous energy within a property and use cures to enhance this energy. It also takes into consideration the outdated energies and reduces the effect of these energies by using cures and various colours.

So both sciences may seem alike but is very much different than the other. Picking Feng Shui over Vaastu gives you a bit of edge as Feng Shui looks at changing times and adjusts the changes according to that. While Vaastu only functions on fixed rules. And this one major difference gives Feng Shui its edge over Vaastu.

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