

- [Home](#)
- [SF STAT!](#)
- [Current Articles](#)
- [CURRENT ISSUE](#)
- [Online Newspapers](#)
- [WEEKLY NEWSLETTERS](#)
- [Media Kit](#)
- [Calendar](#)
- [Business Directory](#)
- [Video Interviews](#)
- [Contact](#)

Select Page

Brain Fitness: A New Trend in Wellness

✘ Brain fitness has emerged as an important trend in wellness programs during the past several years. As members of the boomer generation experience age-related memory problems, many have become interested in finding ways to keep their minds just as sharp as the rest of their bodies. Many wellness programs nationwide have incorporated brain fitness activities, and media coverage of brain fitness research shows that many people have ongoing interest in ways to keep their memory and other mental abilities functioning at their best.

Brain fitness encompasses a wide range of activities including

exercise, diet, stress management, and treatment of mood problems. The most visible aspect of brain fitness in the media, though, is the use of computer software programs to stimulate mental abilities. A recent report finds that more than 20 companies now offer software programs for brain fitness and that the value of brain fitness software sold in 2007 was \$225 million, up from \$100 million in 2005. More than 400 residential facilities now offer computer-based cognitive training centers, and several healthcare and insurance organizations now offer software programs to their members at reduced costs.

Evidence on the effectiveness of these software programs, however, is limited. Although some advocates have compared current brain fitness awareness to similar levels of interest in physical fitness decades ago, the effectiveness of currently-available programs is unclear. A multicenter trial of one computer software package showed statistically significant gains in memory after 40 hours of training, but the size of the gain amounted to knowing, on average, one or two more words on a list repeated several times. On the other hand, a trial of cognitive training sponsored by the National Institute on Aging showed that participants continued to show treatment effects five years after the intervention. Studies are promising, but more research is needed to better understand what kinds of cognitive training are helpful and make changes in everyday functions, like remembering to buy something at the grocery store or being able to drive a car.

Brain fitness programs may have their greatest potential for growth, though, in people who are not yet experiencing age-related memory problems. High-achieving men and women in their 40s and 50s may not worry about current problems but may be keen to maintain their current functioning at work. For them, brain fitness training may be a key to keeping a competitive edge over others at work. It's not an accident that one early review of brain training software was published in *The Wall Street Journal*.

When our program at the University of Miami, Miami Brain Fitness (www.miamibrainfitness.com) was featured in *The Miami Herald*, our phones rang steadily for the following week with

persons inquiring about our program. People who have come for an initial consultation range in age from the 50s to the 80s. Most are not typical clinic patients in that they are often already physically and mentally active. Many are still working and are in exercise classes three days a week or more. They have already made some changes in their diet and usually report positive mood but fairly high stress levels. They come to find out how to add cognitive training to their fitness programs, and are willing to come to our center several times per week it.

It is likely that consumer interest in brain fitness will continue and increase. Elders are concerned about finding ways to stave off Alzheimer's disease, boomers want to hang on to youthful mental as well as physical functioning, and even younger individuals may view brain training as a route to being more competitive on the job. Since many healthcare facilities already have physical fitness programs, expect more of them to add on cognitive fitness training over the next several years.

South Florida Hospital News and Healthcare Report's number one goal is top quality healthcare journalism written and edited for the region's most successful, powerful healthcare business executives and professionals.



Phone : [561-368-6950](tel:561-368-6950)

Fax : [561-368-6978](tel:561-368-6978)

- [Home](#)
- [About](#)
- [CURRENT ISSUE](#)
- [Media Kit](#)
- [Video News](#)
- [Datebook](#)

- [Calendar](#)
- [Business Directory](#)
- [Webinars](#)
- [Contact](#)

Copyright © 2021 Florida Hospital News and Healthcare Report.
Site Designed By