

## **Dance is the best means of avoiding dementia**

Scientists have proven that regular dancing decreases the risk of dementia by 76%

What should you do to keep a clear head in old age? The Albert Einstein College of medicine in New York has taken 21 years in order to solve this puzzle. That's how many years they have been studying how different kinds of activities influence sharpness of mind in the over 75's.

No one was surprised to find that regular crossword solving lessens the risk of dementia by 47% and reading by 35%. But the truly unexpected result was that the activity that best preserves the brain from aging is dance. If you dance often, the risk of dementia decreases by 76%.

How can this be explained? Over the course of life, neurons continually die, but the young brain finds replacements for them more easily and chooses other paths for the performance of one or another function. With age, this process becomes more difficult. After 75, people do more on automatic pilot, out of habit. But dance cannot be automated. Completely different situations arise, in which you have to react and make micro-decisions in a matter of seconds. The brain has to conduct impulses by various paths. It practices and maintains flexibility. Dr. Skinner of Queen's University of Belfast got similar results in his goal-oriented study on the influence of dance on people over 70. According to his research, dancers preserve their health longer – in social, mental and physical ways.

Incidentally, according to project heroes of The Age of Happiness, as well, dance is the most preferential type of physical activity, especially after 80 years of age.

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