



Preventing Alzheimer's with Cognitive Training

PACT

NEWSLETTER

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REMINDERS

Your commitment to PACT as a new or continuing participant is invaluable! We appreciate the time and effort you devote to participate in the PACT study.

Please remember, you will be enrolled in the study for at least 3 years. During this time, we ask that you **do not** enroll in any new research studies or participate in any other computerized brain training programs outside of PACT. **If your contact information has changed, please call or email us so we can update your information.**

Thank you for your contribution and commitment to the fight against dementia, such as Alzheimer's disease.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Page 2

- Meet the PACT Team
- In the News: Brain's Best Friend
- PACT Study Sites

Page 3

- PACT Brain Training
- Questions & Answers

Meet the PACT Team

Dorothy St. Pierre is the PACT Study Site Coordinator at Roskamp Sarasota. She earned her B.A. degree in Interdisciplinary Social Sciences from University of South Florida Sarasota Manatee. She joined the PACT Study Team in 2018 as a Clinical Research Associate and has worked as a tester and trainer.



Dorothy enjoys working with older adults because they are wise, fun, and willing to help others. In her free time, she enjoys laughing hysterically with family and friends, practicing yoga, and sipping fine wines.

In the News: Brain's Best Friend

Multiple studies have explored how our furry companions could benefit the cognitive and psychological health of adults across various ages and backgrounds. One study led by Dr. Ian McDonough, for example, looked at data from 95 participants aged 20-74 years from the Alabama Brain Study on Risk for Dementia. Compared to non-pet owners, pet owners scored higher on tests of attention, processing speed, and memory. Participants' MRI scans demonstrated that owning pets, regardless of number or type of pet, could even reduce individuals' brain age by 15 years! [See the full article here.](#)

Owning a pet may also slow the progression of Alzheimer's disease in older adults. A longitudinal study published by the NIH looks at the differences in thinking and memory screening scores between pet owners and non-pet owners in 223 home-dwelling older adults. The groups were given several cognitive assessments and then tested again after 5 years. Overall, those who owned pets showed better average scores on the cognitive measures than those who did not own pets after the 5 years. [See the full article here.](#)

These studies, and more, provide promising results demonstrating possible benefits of pet ownership

for adults. Such human-animal interactions could not only inspire future research to dive deeper into the benefits of pet ownership, but also inspire future preventative measures to address cognitive complaints in adult populations.

PACT Study Sites

Our study team is always available to answer any questions you have at any time.

Please contact your nearest study site by phone or email.

- **University of South Florida – Tampa, FL**
(352) 405-0324 MCOM-tampapact@usf.edu
- **University of South Florida – St. Pete, FL**
(727) 873-4090 MCOM-sppact@usf.edu
- **University of South Florida – Lakeland, FL**
(863) 800-0835 MCOM-lakelandpact@usf.edu
- **Roskamp Institute – Sarasota**
(941) 500-4447 MCOM-sarasotapact@usf.edu
- **University of Florida – Gainesville, FL**
(352) 294-8314 PACTUF@php.ufl.edu
- **University of Florida – Jacksonville, FL - Downtown**
(904) 244-4695 PACTUFJAX@jax.ufl.edu
- **University of Florida – Jacksonville, FL – Kernan****
(904) 244-9916 UFPACT904@jax.ufl.edu
- **Duke University – Durham, NC**
(919) 668-3154 PACTstudy@duke.edu
- **Clemson University – Seneca, SC**
(864) 916-6220 PACT@Clemson.edu
- **Clemson University – Greenville, SC**
(864) 916-6220 PACT@Clemson.edu

** New Site serving participants who originally enrolled at the University of North Florida (UNF)

www.PACTstudy.org

PACT Study Participant Schedule:

Visit 1

Assessment and Enrollment

Visit 2

Training (within ~ 30 days of Visit 1)

Initial At-Home Training

(within ~ 18 weeks of Visit 1)

1st Annual Booster Training Window

(~ a year after Visit 1)

2nd Annual Booster Training Window

(~ 2.5 years after Visit 1)

***Visit 3 Follow-Up**

Assessment (~ 3 years/36 months after Visit 1)

*You may be asked to further complete: physician evaluation, blood draw, and MRI scan after this visit.

What to expect at Visit 3:

- Your memory, thinking skills, and mood will be screened. This may take around 2.5 hours.
- We may ask you to additionally complete a more thorough memory and thinking skills assessment. We will tell you if you perform as expected or worse than would be expected based on your age and education.
- We may ask you to give a blood sample. You can opt out if you choose.
- A random subsample of 100 persons and participants who perform worse than expected may be asked to come back for a Clinical Evaluation where they will complete a physician visit and an MRI scan. You will receive feedback from a qualified clinician.

Question: *“I am playing the brain games, what do the stars and percentiles mean?”*

Answer:

A: Stars are based on your score for a given level compared to all of the other scores by other people on that level. There is no limit to how many total stars you can earn. Each time you train with an exercise level you have the potential to be rewarded with more stars.

B: Your percentile score can range from 1 to 99. The number indicates what percentage of BrainHQ users your score is higher than. BrainHQ makes this calculation for you compared to everyone who has ever trained, and for you compared to people around your age. Your percentile scores are based on your best performance - if you had a great day, your percentile for the levels you did that day are based on that day. If you had a bad day later, your percentile scores do not decline. It's nice to see your percentile scores increase as you train!

Question: *“I think I am due for my next at-home training period. When should I hear from someone? Should I be training?”*

Answer: There is no need to worry, we send email reminders for each of your at-home training periods and study staff reach out to answer any questions and make sure you can log in. You do not have to play the games outside of these training periods. However, you will still have access to the games and are free to continue playing the games if you would like but you are not obligated to do so if you would prefer to take a break between training periods.

Do you have a question you'd like to have answered in the next newsletter?

Please send your question to MCOM-SAGELab@usf.edu with the subject line **Newsletter Q&A**.