



# Chiropractic Newsletter

## Your Amazing Body

### **“No More Pencils, No More Books!”**

Many children around the world have recently wrapped up another year of school and are now enjoying a summer break. I say “many” because a growing number of children attend year-round schools. But whether you are off for the summer or not, you should know that the learning never stops.

Your body is so smart that it is learning and remembering things even when you are not trying to learn. Maybe you can remember last year’s summer vacation... think about it. Where did you go? Who went with you? What was the weather like? What did you do while you were there? Would you like to do it again? Every time you remember something your brain activates a series of networks setting into motion a complex process that’s not entirely known.

The fact that you can remember things from last year is due in large part to a small organ located inside your brain called the hippocampus. You have two hippocampi, one on the right side and one on the left. These are important in helping you remember things whether it is your school work or anything you

encounter in a day. Whenever you witness an event, learn a new fact, or hear something that you really want to remember, a three-part, memory-making process must occur.

First your brain has to consciously record the event, called encoding. If you’re like most people, you forget a person’s name shortly after being introduced. This doesn’t mean you have a bad memory, it means you didn’t encode it, probably because you were not really paying attention. After your brain encodes the event or fact it needs to glue it down to make it stick. This process is called consolidation. Then the final step is actually remembering it later in time. This is called retrieval.

Here’s the amazing thing, the more you retrieve your memories, the better able you are to remember things. Every time you remember something, the nerve pathway to the memory gets stronger making it easier to remember that thing. For example, when you meet someone new, repeating their name shortly after you learn it helps you to remember it. Repeating it several times makes it all the

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more likely that you will remember it in the long run.

Other things can help improve your memory too, like getting enough sleep, eating a balanced diet, and exercising which gets more oxygen to your brain. Seeing your chiropractor regularly to ensure that your nerve system is free of misalignments called vertebral subluxations is also important. Finally, challenging your brain by actively trying to learn new things can actually increase the size of your brain.

Think of all the things you might learn this summer: Maybe you will meet new people and make new friends, maybe you will read a new book, see a new movie, go somewhere you've never been before. Or maybe you will try a new sport or improve on some aspect of a sport you are already involved in. The possibilities are endless and all of it will keep your brain in good shape so you will be as smart as ever when school starts again in the Fall. Have a happy, healthy, memorable summer!

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