

## **How About a Nice Game of Chess?**

Worried that growing older will affect your mental awareness? Worry no more! Keeping your wits in tact throughout middle age and into your senior years may require nothing more than playing cards, reading a book or doing a crossword puzzle, according to a study that appeared in the *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health*.

In the study, 5,000 people ages of 35-55 were tested for their mathematical, vocabulary and short-term memory capabilities to assess levels of mental acuity. Participants with higher mental functioning were also more involved in leisure activities; moreover, participants who engaged in leisure activities were more likely to meet others who spent more time engaging in intellectual pursuits.

From the study, researchers concluded that people can help keep their minds sharp by taking up a hobby or participating in extracurricular social activities, including taking classes, volunteering or visiting cultural centers, such as art museums.

Why not start improving your mental ability by taking up a new activity? You'll not only stay on the ball, you'll probably make some new friends, too.

### *Reference:*

Manoux-Singh A, Richards M, Marmot M. Leisure activities and cognitive function in middle age; evidence from the Whitehall II study. *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health*. (2003):57, pp 907-913.

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