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NEW STUDY HIGHLIGHTS SEVEN LIFESTYLE FACTORS THAT MAY PREVENT DEMENTIA AS YOU AGE.

A new preliminary study regarding factors which may prevent dementia was released on February 27, 2023, and its findings will be presented at the American Academy of Neurology's Annual Meeting in April 2023.

Continued on page 2

EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

This month we feature associate attorney, Lesley Novotny



We are excited to announce is joining the firm this month. Lesley will counsel individuals and families on all aspects of estate planning, probate, and property agreements.

Lesley strives to see the complexities in a situation and works hard to help people plan successful futures by supporting, listening, and working towards effective solutions.

An experienced attorney, Lesley has practiced in many areas of law including estate planning, family law, mental health law, immigration, business, and civil litigation.

When she isn't practicing law, Lesley enjoys spending time with her family, attending her children's events, reading, and running with her two dogs.

A REMINDER OF THE IMPORTANCE OF PROPER ESTATE PLANNING



By Beth A. McDaniel,
JD, CELA

Estate planning is a crucial step in ensuring that your wishes are carried out after your death.

Continued on pages 2-3

CONT: NEW STUDY HIGHLIGHTS SEVEN LIFESTYLE FACTORS THAT MAY PREVENT DEMENTIA AS YOU AGE.

During the study, 13,270 women were followed for 20 years to analyze their risk for developing dementia. At the end of the 20-year study, 13% of the study's participants had developed dementia.

The main takeaway is that the American Heart Association's 'Life Simple Seven,' which are the most important predictors of heart health and cardiovascular health, are also good for promoting good brain health:

1. Being Active
2. Eating a better diet.
3. Maintaining a healthy weight
4. Not smoking
5. Keeping normal blood pressure
6. Controlling cholesterol
7. Having low blood sugars

In short, although not all dementia risks can be modified, such as genetics, the more eliminated unhealthy habits, the lower your dementia risk will be in the future.

CONT: A REMINDER OF THE IMPORTANCE OF PROPER ESTATE PLANNING

Having an up-to-date estate plan can give you peace of mind knowing that your family, loved ones, and/or causes you support will be taken care of when you are gone. It is important to review and update your estate plan regularly to make sure it reflects any changes in the law, life events, or relocation.

A comprehensive estate plan includes a Will, powers of attorney for health and finances, HIPAA authorization, healthcare directive, advanced dementia directive, and directive regarding disposition of remains. A comprehensive plan may also include a revocable living trust to help eliminate probate and/or to provide a mechanism to manage assets upon your incapacity.

CONT: A REMINDER OF THE IMPORTANCE OF PROPER ESTATE PLANNING

Wills should be updated as your life changes, including deaths, divorces, new relationships, estrangements, or births. Wills should also be updated as your life evolves. For example, if you have minor children, it's likely that not only will your children someday no longer need a legal guardian, at some point they may be able to take on fiduciary roles like personal representative under a Will or agent under a durable power of attorney. Your planning needs may change as your estate increases. For example, did you know that Washington state has an estate tax for estates over \$2.193 million and that if a married couple does proper planning they can protect twice that much?

An estate plan may need to be revised late in life in consideration of a possible long-term care need or to best provide safeguards against financial exploitation by a family member, neighbor, or caregiver at a time when you are most vulnerable and will rely on others for assistance.

It is the best practice to update Durable Powers of Attorney every 4-5 years. Some institutions may consider older powers of attorney stale and be reluctant to honor them. The same applies to health care directives.

Directives regarding disposition of remains should be updated as your wishes become more clear and perhaps to take advantage of newer available options like composting or alkaline hydrolysis.

In summary, just as your finances need to be regularly reviewed, so do your estate planning documents so that they are current under the law, are in accordance with your wishes, and most appropriate to your circumstances.

If have questions or wish to make an appointment, please contact our client care coordinator, Margo Passeau, at (425) 296-3121.
