Cannabis and Alcohol Are Aging Your Brain

JAN. 28, 2025

BY HEATHER HURLOCK

Welcome back to *The Mindset* **by Super Age.**

Hello to the now 190,000+ Super Agers among us! You're now part of a community that believes **thriving isn't about ticking boxes or chasing perfection—it's about stepping boldly into your potential** with curiosity and intention as your guides. Here, we explore the science, mindset, and habits that help us live fully at every age.

Today, I want to talk about balance. Finding balance is more than work/life alignment or stability and core strength; it's also about intention and action, short-term gains and long-term benefits. In this week's edition, we're exploring tools and strategies that reflect this balance: groundbreaking medications that promise to reshape longevity, the everyday behaviors that are aging your brain, the apps making nutrition tracking easier, and the surprising way to create habits that stick.

As you dive into this week's issue, think of it as more than a newsletter—it's a conversation about **what's possible when we embrace progress over perfection and curiosity over complacency**. Ask yourself: what resonates with my wellness journey? And let's explore the future of wellness, one intentional choice at a time.

Onwards and upward!

David Stewart
Founder

?BODY WISDOM

The Drugs Reshaping Health and Longevity

About 1 in 8 U.S. adults has tried or currently uses a GLP-1 medication (like Ozempic and Wegovy), with 25% of users over the age of 60. A major study in *Nature Medicine* revealed **these drugs may reduce risks of Alzheimer's**, cardiovascular disease, substance abuse, infectious illnesses, and several respiratory conditions. The promise is compelling—but careful management is essential.

How They Work

- **Mimic Hormones:** GLP-1 medications mimic a hormone called glucagon-like peptide-1, which influences both the brain and body. They regulate appetite by targeting brain receptors in areas controlling hunger, promoting a feeling of fullness and slowing gastric emptying, which leads to weight loss.
- **Reduce Inflammation:** Simultaneously, they reduce inflammation, enhance neuroplasticity, and improve metabolic health, protecting against Alzheimer's, cardiovascular disease, infections, and respiratory conditions.

What You Should Know

- **Muscle Loss:** While effective for weight loss, these medications **can result in rapid muscle loss**—accounting for as much as 40% of total weight lost without intervention. Strength training and high-protein meals are non-negotiables to support muscle retention.
- **Dehydration:** Because these medications suppress thirst, there is an increased risk of dehydration.
- **Other risks:** GLP-1s can increase the risk of arthritic disorders, low blood pressure,

kidney dysfunction, and pancreatitis.

The Big Picture

GLP-1 medications are powerful tools for managing weight and improving overall health, but they're not magic bullets. They work best as part of a comprehensive approach that prioritizes long-term wellness, intentional habits, and a proactive partnership with your doctor.

EAT WELL

Is This the Best Meal-Tracking App?

With so many meal-tracking apps out there, it can be hard to know which one is worth your time. Enter the Center for Science in the Public Interest (CSPI)—a nonprofit organization known for its **rigorous research and science-backed recommendations** in the field of public health. When it comes to food tracking, CSPI analyzed the leading apps for ease of use, accuracy, and nutritional focus. So, which app did they pick as the best? **Cronometer**. Unlike other apps that focus on calorie counting and only check that some nutritional data is correct, **Cronometer** checks all submissions. They also prioritize nutrient density, offering detailed tracking for key nutrients like protein and fiber.

Why Protein and Fiber Matter

According to recent research, these two nutrients are game-changers for weight management and health:

- **Protein:** Preserves muscle mass, boosts metabolism, and helps you feel full longer.
- **Fiber:** Supports gut health, reduces inflammation, and regulates blood sugar.

Try the app and let us know what you think. Is it the best?

DID YOU KNOW?

Cannabis and Alcohol Are Aging Your Brain

A groundbreaking study published in the *Journal of Alzheimer's Disease* analyzed over 62,454 brain scans from people aged 9 months to 105 years, offering one of **the most comprehensive looks at factors that accelerate brain aging.** Researchers studied 128 brain regions to predict chronological age and identify factors that accelerate aging. **Here's what they found:**

- **Blood Flow Decline:** Decreased blood flow, especially in the hippocampus and prefrontal cortex, was a key driver of aging, impacting memory, focus, and decision-making.
- **Cannabis Abuse:** Linked to 2.8 years of accelerated brain aging (wow!), highlighting risks even as cannabis becomes more widely accepted.
- **Alcohol Abuse:** Associated with 0.6 years of accelerated aging, further emphasizing the importance of rethinking your drinking habits.
- **Lifestyle Matters**: Chronic conditions like hypertension and poor health behaviors compounded these effects.

Understanding these predictors offers a powerful opportunity to protect and enhance your cognitive well-being.

STAY AMAZED

Want to Make a New Habit Stick?

Your morning routine sets the stage for long-term habit change, according to a meta-analysis in *Healthcare*. Researchers found that **morning habits are significantly more likely to stick than evening ones.** Why? Mornings provide stability and take advantage of your brain's heightened focus, making it easier to establish automatic behaviors.

Why Mornings Win:

- **Cortisol Peaks:** Your brain's natural alertness in the morning supports habit formation.
- **Habit Stacking:** Habits tied to existing routines—like stretching after brushing your teeth—become second nature faster.
- **Consistency:** Mornings are less prone to interruptions, creating a reliable space for new practices.
- **Patience:** Forming new health habits takes between 59-66 days, with some people needing anywhere from 4 to 335. In other words, everyone's different. Find what works for you.

Try it: Choose small, intentional actions like drinking water after waking or meditating for two minutes after coffee. **Use the "Why" Test:** Align your habits with your larger goals. Instead of simply walking for exercise, frame it as "building strength for the long run." Pair habits with visual cues, like a yoga mat by your bed, to reinforce consistency. Celebrate your victories—Just a pat on the back, a kind word for yourself, or, if you're BJ Fogg, a jump in the air.

Stuff We Love

Destination Inspiration

Equinox Hotels Sleep Experience, NYC. This isn't your typical hotel stay. At the Equinox flagship in New York, guests can immerse themselves in sleep science, with cutting-edge technologies curated by Dr. Matthew Walker. Think personalized sleep strategies, light therapy, and an environment designed for recovery. It's a playground for those seeking rest and resilience.

Recipe of the Week

Protein-Packed Builder Brownies. Satisfy your sweet tooth and fuel your body with these delicious protein-packed brownies from powerhouse trainer Michelle MacDonald. Made with wholesome ingredients like almond butter, eggs, and whey protein, they're a perfect post-workout treat or midday energy boost. Sweetened with a touch of honey and flavored with cocoa powder, these brownies deliver rich chocolate flavor without refined sugar. Try them this week!

Read This

Full Catastrophe Living by Jon Kabat-Zinn. This isn't just a book—it's a manual for resilience. Kabat-Zinn's timeless guide weaves mindfulness into the chaos of everyday life, offering tools to navigate stress, chronic pain, and uncertainty. Whether you're new to mindfulness or a seasoned practitioner, its insights on living fully will resonate anew.

*The information provided in this article is for educational and informational purposes only and is not intended as health, medical, or financial advice. Do not use this information to diagnose or treat any health condition. Always consult a qualified healthcare provider regarding any questions you may have about a medical condition or health objectives.****Read our disclaimers****.*

WRITTEN BY:



Heather Hurlock