Findings from the Sydney Centenarian Study

Dr Melissa Slavin
Australian Bureau of Statistics (2011)

- 4252 centenarians in Australia
- Individuals over the age of 90 years are the fastest growing proportion of the Australian population
- It is estimated that there will be 12,000 centenarians in Australia by 2020, and 50,000 by 2050
Jane Gray, born 1 December 1901

- Aged 111 years, 154 days, Jane is the oldest living person in Australia

- Jane still lives at home, thanks to the care of her daughter, and continues to knit teddy bears for charity

- Her secret for living a long life is "eat plenty of good food and don't drink booze or smoke"
Sydney Centenarian Study

- 321 people recruited for the study
  - 194 followed up once
  - 127 followed up twice
  - 85 followed up three times
- 28 MRIs completed
- 218 blood samples collected
Still Driving at 100!
Our Sample

• Age range: 95-109 yrs
• Age category:
  – 95-99 = 257 (85.7%)
  – 100-104 = 40 (13.3%)
  – 105-109 = 3 (1%)
Our Sample

• 72.2% Female

• Education range: 0 – 26 yrs (Avg: 10.3 yrs)

• Education category:
  – 0-8 yrs = 10.4%
  – 9+yrs = 89.6%
## Dwelling

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<tr>
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<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Living in own home</td>
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# Medical History

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<tr>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>MAS (age 70-90)</th>
<th>SCS (age 95-109)</th>
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<tr>
<td>High blood pressure</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>44.9%</td>
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<td>Diabetes</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
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<td>Heart attack</td>
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<td>Stroke</td>
<td>4%</td>
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Diagnosing Dementia

• Difficult to diagnose – what is normal? How to compensate for frailty, vision or hearing loss, language difficulties?

• Dementia rate of around 50%: So 50% do not have dementia!
Secrets to a Long Life

• Good genes: family history of longevity
• Good mental health
• Well supported by family and friends
• Able to cope with life’s stresses by stress-shedding
• High in optimism, low in neuroticism
Secrets to a Long Life

• Don’t smoke
• Keep physically active
• Variable diet and nutrition; normal or low weight
• Safe levels of drinking
• Low BP & cholesterol
• Good health to age 90 years
Thanks to...

- Funding Bodies: The University of New South Wales and The National Health and Medical Research Council
- SCS team
- All the participants, informants, families and carers