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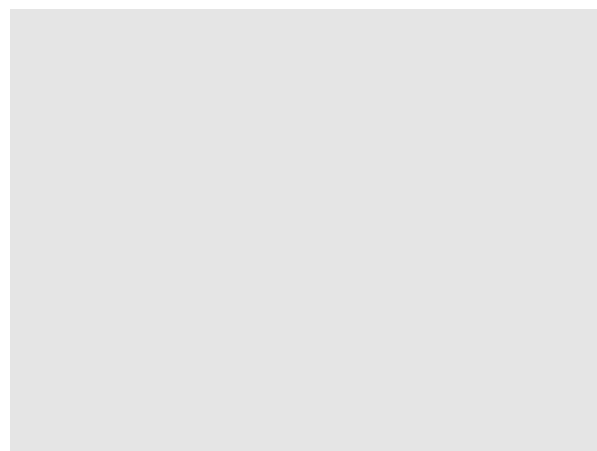
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## WKU's Bingocize program seeks participants for clinical trial

AARON MUDD [amudd@bgdailynews.com](mailto:amudd@bgdailynews.com) 29 min ago



Jason Crandall

Most of us understand the host of chronic diseases and health conditions that exercise helps prevent or keep at bay – from heart disease and type 2 diabetes to several types of cancers.

But fewer people realize the research-based benefits of exercise for our cognitive health, especially as we age.

For older adults, the barriers are often psychological rather than physical. They're afraid to jump in, believe it won't be enjoyable or aren't motivated to do it alone.

Enter Bingocize, a program developed at WKU that combines a bingo-like game with exercise and health education. The program typically involves an instructor guiding participants through low- to moderate-impact exercises integrated into the game.

Now, as Bingocize enters the final stages of a clinical trial funded by the National Institutes of Health, it's seeking additional participants to study the benefits of the app-based program.

"People are really enjoying playing with the app," said Jason Crandall, a Western Kentucky University professor. He first came up with the idea after a regularly scheduled Bingo game upset his plans to introduce a new exercise program at a senior center.

Through a commercialization process at WKU, Crandall said the concept is now in 27 states and there are other studies unfolding overseas in Poland and the United Kingdom.

For the NIH-backed clinical trial, researchers have been working in at least 20 senior facilities across Kentucky and Tennessee, Crandall said, but more participants are needed.

Study participants are asked to make a 14 week commitment to the program, beginning in the first week by completing cognitive and physical tests and questionnaires. After that, they'll get started with the program, a commitment that requires one-hour Bingocize sessions twice a week over the course of 12 weeks. The program concludes with follow-up testing to measure any changes in the participants' cognitive or physical health.

Participants will receive \$40 and the chance to win \$100. Prizes will also be up for grabs. Additionally, Crandall said participants who help recruit and lead a group through the process can qualify for \$400.

There are a few conditions that must be met, however. To participate in the study, the individual must be older than 60 years old, cannot have any neurological problems, such as Parkinson's disease or multiple sclerosis or dementia, and cannot be physically active. Participants are also asked to be able to stand and understand English.

It's worth noting that their participation may not actually involve exercise at all, Crandall said.

That's because, as part of the study, participating groups will be assigned a random condition – including completing the program without engaging in exercise. The process is part of gauging how effective each aspect of the program is through research.

However, no matter what condition they're assigned, Crandall said, study participants will still get to use the Bingocize app and play the game while getting paid.

“They still get to have fun,” he said.

To get involved, inquiries may be made by email at [bingocize@wku.edu](mailto:bingocize@wku.edu) or by contacting WKU’s Center for Applied Science in Health and Aging by calling 270-929-0479.

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