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Study Says Experience, Not Age, Is Why Our Brains Slow Down

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DETROIT (WWJ) – Getting older is usually associated with losing brain power — but a new study says that may not be the case.

The study, out of Germany, argues that older brains may just take longer to process ever-increasing amounts of knowledge, and that's been mistaken for declining capacity.

Think about your brain like a brand new computer ... It's really fast, right? But as your hard drive

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accumulates more files, your P.C. starts to slow down.

Wayne State University Gerontology researcher Dr. Peter Lichtenberg says it's a valid analogy.

"If you've acquired information about 6,000 birthdays over your lifetime and you're having a little bit of trouble remembering whose is which, and you only get maybe 75 percent accuracy," said Lichtenberg, "is that really worse than somebody who's acquired maybe 100 birthdays and gets 90 percent accuracy because there's less?"

Dr. Lichtenberg agrees with the study's authors who say, most standard cognitive testing methods are flawed, which can confuse increased knowledge with declining capacity.

The study has been published in the journal [Topics in Cognitive Science](#).



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