

THE QUEST FOR MEMORY DRUGS

Thanks to the neurological research of Nobel Laureate Eric Kandel and others, new insights into the mechanisms that help keep our brain sharp rely on improving your recall with a “memory pill”.

No pill to improve memory, aside from alternative remedies of dubious effectiveness, is currently on the market. But several biotech companies are launching products grounded in the latest research. Others, on the other hand, take the consequences of smoking to treat memory loss.

Scientists now know that the brain first stores short-term information in the prefrontal side and then transforms selected bits into long-term memories via the hippocampus, a region hidden above the ear. The concept of memory is so complex that many mid-century researchers avoided studying it. In fact, little progress was made before 1953.

Questions

1. State in your own words what the author means when he says: “No pill to improve memory (...) is currently on the market.” (2 marks)

2. Say in each case whether the statement is true or false according to the text. Write T or F. If the answer is not mentioned in the text, mark it as false. (2 marks)
 - a) the idea of “memory pills” was invented by Eric Kandel among others _____
 - b) nowadays you can find pills to improve memory at the chemist’s _____
 - c) the consequences of smoking help the study memory loss _____
 - d) the brain began to be studied thoroughly at the beginning of the 1990s _____

3. These words are found in the text: *research, insights, improving, pill, aside, dubious, currently, loss, stores, bits, hidden, via*. Choose the ones that mean the same as the following: (2 marks)
 - a) doubtful _____
 - b) tablet _____
 - c) by means of _____
 - d) apart _____

4. Choose a, b or c after each statement below. Only one answer is correct. (2 marks)
 1. “Memory pills” help you improve your...
 - a) memory
 - b) calls
 - c) sight

 2. Alternative remedies are...
 - a) very effective
 - b) rather effective

