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My brain is one of a total 240 that will be examined at three facilities: UCSF, the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minn., and Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston with sponsorship from the National Institutes of Health. Rosen said they are still looking for additional control group members with no apparent memory problems.

Having volunteered for a number of worthy causes over the years, getting my brain examined for a research study was actually interesting and clearly way more effective than my lame construction attempts at a Habitat for Humanity site. Those interested in more information can visit memory.ucsf.edu or call Aly Caplan, research coordinator at UCSF's Memory and Aging Center, at (415) 476-0670.

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[back](#)

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