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Natural Insights for Well Being®

May

Mind & Memory

Nutrients support healthy brain function

Magnesium and vitamins enhance memory

Raising magnesium levels in the brain and neurons appears to improve memory. In this study, 102 healthy men and women, aged 18 to 65, took a placebo or 400 mg of magnesium L-threonate, 80 IU vitamin D, 12 mg vitamin C, 4 mg vitamin B6, and 50 mg phosphatidylserine, half in the morning, half at bedtime.

Before the study and after 30 days, doctors administered the Clinical Memory Test, measuring several domains of cognition: remembering 12 words from a list of 24; associating pairs of related words, and pairs of unrelated words; remembering 15 familiar, everyday images; recognizing abstract graphics; linking face portraits with the surname, career, and hobby shown before; as well as general cognition and memory.

In all measures, the magnesium group saw scores improve by 35.6 to 60.9 percent, while the placebo group did not improve. Doctors said the threonate form of magnesium is highly bioavailable.

Flavonols preserve cognition

Older adults with higher flavonols in the diet slowed age-related decline in cognition. The study included 961 men and women, average age 81, without



dementia, who answered a dietary questionnaire and took cognitive and memory tests annually.

After an average of seven years of follow-up, those who got at least 15 mg of total flavonols per day—equal to a cup of dark, leafy greens—had higher scores on 19 cognitive tests, and a slower rate of cognitive decline per decade, compared to those who got the least flavonols; about 5 mg per day. Particular components of flavonols varied in their effect on cognition, with kaempferol having the greatest benefit, followed by myricetin, and quercetin.

Discussing the findings, doctors said the results build on prior research showing flavonols are bioactive and possess anti-inflammatory, antioxidant properties that influence cognition.

REFERENCE: NUTRIENTS; 2022, VOL. 14, NO. 24, 5235

MAY'S

Healthy Insight

Alzheimer's & Vitamin D

Vitamin D protected against developing Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia. Doctors measured levels of vitamins A, D, E and beta-carotene in 1,334 people who were free from dementia at the start of this seven-year study.

One-third (33.7 percent) had optimal vitamin D levels of at least 50 nanomoles per liter of blood (nmol/L) or 125 nanograms per milliliter (ng/mL) and were less likely to have developed any form of dementia. Those who were deficient—less than 25 nmol/L or 62.5 ng/mL—were 91 percent more likely to have developed any dementia, and 128 percent more likely for Alzheimer's.

REFERENCE: NUTRIENTS; 2023, VOL. 15, NO. 1, 61

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Women

Saw palmetto, probiotics, and prebiotics support female health

Saw palmetto improved urinary symptoms

In this first saw palmetto study of adult women, 76 participants, aged at least 50, with daytime and nighttime frequency among other urinary symptoms, took a placebo or 320 mg of saw palmetto extract per day. All participants began the study with the same total symptom score rankings.

After 12 weeks, all measures of urinary symptoms had improved significantly for those taking saw palmetto compared to placebo and to the start of the study. The measures included the lower urinary tract symptoms of day and nighttime frequency, storage, incomplete emptying, urgency, incontinence, slow stream, and bladder and urethral pain.

Doctors said saw palmetto eases

urinary frequency by interacting with receptors in the bladder that relax its smooth muscle lining, and believe this is the first study to demonstrate its urinary symptom benefits.

Pro- and prebiotics rebalanced hormones in PCOS

Polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS) is a hormonal imbalance characterized by too much testosterone, an irregular menstrual cycle, reduced fertility, insulin resistance, and obesity. This study included 104 women, aged 18 to 40, with PCOS who took a placebo or a 10- to 20-billion colony-forming-unit combination of probiotics, along with 100 mg of the prebiotic fructo-oligosaccharides, per day. Both groups received diet and exercise plans.

After six months, those taking

pro- and prebiotics saw more regular menstrual cycles, lower testosterone levels, smaller waist size, better waist-to-hip ratio, and reported improved quality of life.

REFERENCE: NUTRIENTS; 2022, VOL. 14, No. 6, 1190



Skin

Pomegranate and vitamin D protect the skin

Pomegranate reduced facial wrinkles

Diet and lifestyle measures may help protect the skin. In this study, 28 healthy men and women, aged 25 to 55, took a placebo or 250 mg of

pomegranate extract per day. Before and after four weeks, doctors measured facial wrinkle severity, and changes in the skin and gut microbiomes.

Those taking pomegranate saw a 6.2 percent decrease in facial wrinkle severity compared to a 1 percent increase for placebo, and also had 21.9 less oily sebum excretions on the forehead compared to a 17.2 increase for placebo. The skin microbiome also contained higher levels of good bacteria.

Beneficial short-chain fatty acids in the gut increased 38 percent for pomegranate vs. a 1.8 percent decrease for placebo. And those in the pomegranate group with higher levels of the gut bacteria, egggerthellaceae, had less trans-epidermal water loss—meaning more hydrated skin.

Vitamin D supplements linked to less skin cancer

Because earlier studies have been inconclusive, doctors were not sure of the role vitamin D plays in cancers of the skin. This study included 498 men and women, aged 21 to 79, 96 of whom were immunosuppressed, increasing their chances for skin cancers. Doctors measured vitamin D levels and compared them with past or present melanomas, and any type of skin cancer.

Overall, those who regularly supplemented with vitamin D were less than half as likely as those who did not take vitamin D supplements to have, or to have had, a melanoma, and less likely to have, or to have had, any type of skin cancer.

REFERENCE: JOURNAL OF CLINICAL MEDICINE; 2022, VOL. 11, No. 22, 6724



Immunity

Nutrients protect the respiratory system

Quercetin resolved Covid symptoms

People with Covid who dosed with quercetin saw inflammation and other symptoms resolve more quickly than placebo. In this study, 100 people with mild to moderate Covid-19 took standard care along with a placebo or 500 mg of quercetin phytosome per day.



After one week, 68 percent of those taking quercetin saw symptoms resolve compared to 24 percent for placebo, and for those with acute symptoms, 52 percent were resolved in the quercetin group vs. 24 percent for placebo. The quercetin group also had lower levels of an enzyme, lactate dehydrogenase, that raises chances for severe symptoms in Covid and other conditions.

Discussing the findings, doctors said quercetin sped clearance of symptoms in early-stage Covid, and reduced the hyper-inflammatory response that accompanies the virus.

Black cumin, astaxanthin support lung function

Black cumin and astaxanthin reduced upper respiratory tract (URT)

symptoms in marathon runners. In this study, 32 male and female runners took a placebo or 500 mg of black cumin seed oil plus 8 mg of astaxanthin oleoresin per day, beginning three weeks before and continuing one week after a marathon, or half-marathon competition.

URT symptoms in the black cumin astaxanthin group were 78 percent lower than for placebo. The treatment group also had an 11 percent improvement in an index of “global mood state.” Levels of the stress hormone cortisol were also 20 percent lower, and a bacteria associated with immune regulation, streptococcus thermophilus, was 63 percent higher than placebo.

REFERENCE: FRONTIERS IN PHARMACOLOGY; 2023, VOL. 13, ARTICLE No. 1096853

MAY'S

Ahead of the Curve

Early-Stage Discoveries: Antioxidants, Phytonutrients, Vitamins, Omega-3s, Lutein, Hydrolyzed Collagen

Good results in the lab can lead to larger human trials. Here are some of the most promising recent findings.

Nutrient combo boosts fertility

In the lab, male and female mice on a high-fat diet that received alpha lipoic acid, CoQ10, vitamin E, green tea, green coffee, forskolin, folic acid, L-arginine, omega-3s, and creatine monohydrate saw less weight gain, and had better liver function compared to those on the high-fat diet that did not receive the nutrients.

After a mating and gestation period, those on the supplement had an average of four litters vs. none, and a fertilization rate of 67 percent vs. zero.

Lutein protects cells from UV damage

The antioxidant carotenoid lutein is “hydrophobic,” meaning it resists dissolving in water. Retinal cells contain a carotenoid pigment layer that protects the eye from UV light, but that can also be damaged by it. In the lab, doctors used a novel nanodisk delivery system to introduce a highly soluble form of lutein into a line of human retinal pigment cells. The nanodisk technology improved lutein solubility, and significantly increased lutein content in the cells.

Collagen peptides protect skin

As skin ages, it loses type I and type III collagen, becomes less elastic, retains less moisture, and becomes more susceptible to infection. In the lab, doctors introduced collagen peptides into skin cells damaged by bacterial toxins. Collagen lowered inflammatory factors IL-1B, IL-8, and tumor necrosis alpha; and increased growth and vessel-forming factors that promote wound healing. This is the first study to show collagen can repair epidermal and collagen tissue cells.

REFERENCE: NUTRIENTS; 2023, VOL. 15, No. 3, 611

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Probiotics in Chemotherapy

Multi-strain probiotic improved microbiome

Less nausea, constipation, and diarrhea

Participants in this study had undergone chemotherapy treatment after surgery for colorectal cancer. Half of the 100 participants took a placebo while the other half took a combination of probiotics including strains of bifidobacterium and lactobacillus. Because of their microbiome-rebalancing effects, doctors thought probiotics would reduce complications from the procedure that typically include nausea, acid reflux, abdominal pain and bloating, constipation, and diarrhea.

Compared to placebo, those taking probiotics were 33 to 75 percent less likely to experience any

of these symptoms. Discussing the findings, doctors said chemotherapy alters the structure and composition of the microbiome, leading to these complications. Probiotics help restore healthy gut function by promoting the beneficial short-chain fatty acids that form as dietary fiber ferments in the colon.

REFERENCE: NUTRIENTS; 2023, VOL. 15, No. 2, 356



Your Good News!®

We're dedicated to discovering the benefits of good nutrition and healthy lifestyle, and hope this issue of Natural Insights for Well Being® informs and inspires you to take an active role in your health. Please ask us to assist you with any natural products you would like to know more about.

These articles provide nutritional information only and do not replace professional medical advice.

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