

Functional Medicines' Point of View: Study demonstrates these two nutritional supplements help improve cognitive function in healthy young adults

By Dr. Michael John Badanek, BS, DC, CNS, CTP, DACBN, DCBCN, MSGR./CHEV

Research has demonstrated the benefits of the carotenoids lutein and zeaxanthin on eye health, and some research had emerged on their benefits on cognition in older adults. Lutein is selectively incorporated into the macula as well as the brain. Lutein levels in the macula and the brain have been associated with better cognition.

According to a study published three days ago in *Nutrients*, researchers demonstrated that supplementation with lutein and zeaxanthin improve cognitive function in young, healthy adults. In this study researchers assessed cognitive function of 51 healthy young individuals, 18 to 30 years old. These individuals were randomized into supplement and placebo groups. Macular pigment optical density (MPOD) was measured as well as cognitive function using the CNS Vital Signs testing platform. MPOD and cognitive function were measured every four months for one year of supplementation. As a result, supplementation increased MPOD significantly over the course of the year compared to the placebo group. Researchers demonstrated that lutein and zeaxanthin increases in MPOD, which resulted in significant improvements in spatial memory, reasoning ability, and complex attention.

In addition to supplementation, avocados are a great bioavailable source of lutein, containing approximately 0.5 mg of lutein. A study published in August of this year demonstrated that avocado consumption increases macular pigment density.

Other brain-supportive nutrients to consider include GPC, citicoline, Ginkgo biloba, phosphatidylserine, and fish oil. GPC and citicoline are water soluble forms of choline that can cross the blood brain barrier and support brain health. These help make more acetylcholine, neurotransmitters, and phosphatidylcholine in the cell membranes. In addition, phosphatidylserine is an essential nutrient for brain function and is not found in the diet, making proper supplementation all that more important.

Dr. Badanek has been and currently is 40 years into active/private practice in the Ocala/Marion County, Florida region. Dr. Badanek practices Natural/Holistic Medicine through the use of Functional/Integrative Models for diagnostic and treatment protocols for the health challenged. Find him online at Dr.Badanek.com and www.alternativewholistic.com, and see what the facility has to offer the sick and health challenged. To schedule an appointment call 352-622-1151