



ELITE

Personal Training and Fitness Solutions

HEALTH TOPIC OF THE WEEK

2/13 - Cinnamon and Cognitive Function

This week we will explore the benefits of cinnamon from a research perspective. Why this focus? It's because background research is the absolute bedrock for our articles. Newsletter readers take heart. We won't steer you wrong. Our unbiased information is scientifically accurate. That's because we do our homework!

Your newsletters should be interesting and informative. We hope that's the case. They should not read like scientific journals, but rest assured we consult plenty of those on your behalf. To appreciate what research entails, it's helpful to understand how it is conducted.

So, rather than bulleting the benefits of cinnamon or listing dozens of references, let's take a behind-the-scenes look at some recent research on cinnamon. OK, here we go...



Background

Cinnamon, an aromatic spice generally used in baking, comes from the inner bark of Cinnamomum trees. These evergreen trees are found in the Himalayas as well as rainforests and other forests of southern China, India and Southeast Asia.

In addition to its unique flavor, cinnamon has several well-established benefits. For instance, studies show cinnamon has anti-inflammatory, antioxidant, and anticancer properties and can boost the immune system.

New research also shows that cinnamon's bioactive compounds could boost brain function, particularly memory and learning.



Elite Personal Training and Fitness Solutions does not provide medical treatment or intervention. We acknowledge scientific evidence that appropriately intensive exercise and sustainable nutritional intervention can have significant impact on chronic health disorders and obesity, dramatically improving symptoms when recommendations are followed. Please visit us at Eliteptf.com for more information and to schedule your evaluation.

Research Purpose & Description

A team of researchers at Birjand University of Medical Sciences in Iran recently reviewed several past studies that explored the effects of cinnamon on cognitive function. Their analysis, outlined in Nutritional Neuroscience, highlights the potential value of cinnamon for preventing or reducing memory and learning impairments.

Research Methodology

Two thousand six hundred five studies were collected from different databases in September 2021. All of those studies were investigated for eligibility. This is step one in a research review. Next, the researchers discarded all studies that did not meet their stringent inclusion criteria. This is an arduous but necessary process. The result? Only 40 studies wound up in the systematic review.

Among these 40 studies, 33 were carried out in vivo (examining real living organisms, such as humans, rodents, or other animals). Five of them were conducted in vitro (outside of living organisms - for instance by analyzing cells or post-mortem tissue), and two were clinical studies with medical patients.



Data Considered & Analyzed

The researchers extracted abundant data relevant to all the studies. This included:

- author(s)
- year of publication
- type and dose of cinnamon
- size of sample population
- gender and age of participants
- duration and method of consumption
- results obtained



The researchers then assessed the quality and reliability of the studies by examining their design, sample size, inclusion criteria, and methodology.

Finally, they analyzed and compared the results of the 40 studies. The majority suggested that cinnamon could positively impact both memory and cognitive function.



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Clinical Studies

Out of the two clinical studies, one was conducted on adolescents and the other on pre-diabetic adults who were 60 years old or younger. The first study asked the adolescents to chew cinnamon gum, while the latter asked participants to eat 2g of cinnamon on white bread.

The study on adolescents yielded positive results, suggesting that chewing cinnamon gum improved memory function and reduced anxiety. In contrast, the clinical study on pre-diabetic adults found no significant changes in cognitive function following the consumption of cinnamon.



“Most studies reported that cinnamon might be useful for preventing and reducing cognitive function impairment,” the researchers wrote in their paper. “It can be used as an adjuvant in the treatment of related diseases. However, more studies should be done.”

Comment

Thanks for hanging in with me. Some readers may have preferred a much shorter article – one that cuts to the chase and says that recent evidence strongly suggests cinnamon may help boost memory and learning. However, I wanted to give you an idea of the extensive background research that guides what we write and what we do or do not commend.

Bottom Line

Cinnamon is a powerful antioxidant and anti-inflammatory. It is well-established that cinnamon helps reduce heart disease, including elevated cholesterol, triglycerides and blood pressure.

More recent research suggests that cinnamon can also improve memory and learning.

Reach out to us so we can help you incorporate this tasty and healthy spice into your diet.



References

Samaneh Nakhaee et al, Cinnamon and cognitive function: a systematic review of preclinical and clinical studies, Nutritional Neuroscience (2023). DOI: 10.1080/1028415X.2023.2166436



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