

RESEARCH  
ROUNDUP

It's our goal here at *Good Health Lifestyles* to bring you the latest in cutting-edge research for a variety of common health issues. Because we believe that knowledge is power—especially when it comes to health—we are digging deeper into the exciting new research from leading medical journals and breaking it down to help you get the most from today's science.

## Ayurvedic Adaptogen Combo Boosts Brain Activity

### THE STUDY ABSTRACT:

**Dimpfel W, Schombert L, Keplinger-Dimpfel IK, Panossian A. *Pharmaceuticals* (Basel). Effects of an Adaptogenic Extract on Electrical Activity of the Brain in Elderly Subjects with Mild Cognitive Impairment: A Randomized, Double-Blind, Placebo-Controlled, Two-Armed Cross-Over Study. 2020 Mar 14;13(3):45.**

**BACKGROUND:** The current and potential uses of adaptogens are mainly related to treatment of stress-induced fatigue, impaired cognitive function, mental illness, and behavioral- and age-related disorders. However, clinical evidence regarding the efficacy of adaptogens is limited. The primary aim of this study is to determine whether a combination of adaptogenic plant extracts from *Andrographis paniculata* and *Withania somnifera* (Adaptra Forte) could be used as effective and safe treatment for impaired cognitive, memory, or learning ability functions and sleep disorders.

**METHODS:** The changes in electroencephalogram (EEG) frequency ranges in 17 different brain regions, psychometric tests of cognitive performance, as well as standard questionnaires of

assessment of mood and sleep were measured after single and repeated administration of Adaptra Forte or placebo for four weeks and after a two-week treatment-free follow-up period within a randomized, double-blind, placebo-controlled, two-armed cross-over study.

**RESULTS:** Adaptra Forte significantly improved cognitive performance in the d2-Test for attention and the concentration performance test after four weeks' treatment, and was positively correlated with increases in  $\delta$  and  $\theta$  power in the quantitative EEG compared with placebo during cognitive challenges.

**CONCLUSION:** The results of this study suggest that Adaptra Forte exhibits a calming and anxiolytic effect without sedation, and is associated with overall stress-protective activity.

### WHAT IT MEANS TO YOU:

Andrographis and ashwagandha are well known herbs that have been used for centuries in Ayurvedic practice. As adaptogens, both herbs can moderate the mind and body's response to stressors, helping people stay more focused, resilient, and physically energetic.

In this clinical study, a combination of andrographis and ashwagandha improved focus and reaction time in men and women at an average age of 64 with mild cognitive impairment.

The blend of andrographis and ashwagandha was compared to a placebo using three different



assessments, including cognitive performance, questionnaires of mood and sleep, and electroencephalographic (EEG) measurements of brainwave activity.

The adaptogen combo significantly improved cognitive performance as measured by the d2 Test of Attention and the concentration performance test after four weeks of treatment. This timed test tracks the scanning speed and accuracy of individuals as they cross out any letter “d” with two marks around it. And each letter d is surrounded by similar letters, like p and b, as well as other “d”s with different numbers of marks.

In self-reported sleep questionnaires, there were significant improvements in sleep quality and the feelings of restorative sleep compared to placebo. And, results of a Profile of Mood State (POMS) questionnaire found that the herbal combination gave individuals a “thirst for action.” The results of the EEG showed significant changes in regions of the brain associated with calm and focus. ■