Is Ginkgo biloba a cognitive enhancer in healthy individuals? A meta-analysis.

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Abstract

OBJECTIVE: We conducted a meta-analysis to examine whether Ginkgo biloba (G. biloba) enhances cognitive function in healthy individuals.

METHODS: Scopus, Medline, Google Scholar databases and recent qualitative reviews were searched for studies examining the effects of G. biloba on cognitive function in healthy individuals. We identified randomised controlled trials containing data on memory (K = 13), executive function (K = 7) and attention (K = 8) from which effect sizes could be derived. The analyses provided measures of memory, executive function and attention in 1132, 534 and 910 participants, respectively.

RESULTS: Effect sizes were non-significant and close to zero for memory (d = -0.04: 95%CI -0.17 to 0.07), executive function (d = -0.05: 95%CI -0.17 to 0.05) and attention (d = -0.08: 95%CI -0.21 to 0.02). Meta-regressions showed that effect sizes were not related to participant age, duration of the trial, daily dose, total dose or sample size.

CONCLUSIONS: We report that G. biloba had no ascertainable positive effects on a range of targeted cognitive functions in healthy individuals.

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