



With Pride

Inclusive Integrated Healthcare
In clinic & online services

IMPROVE YOUR FOCUS, CONCENTRATION AND MEMORY

Since Covid-19 started impacting our lives last year, we have seen a significant increase in those stating that they are struggling to focus and concentrate on a task, people are terming this as an overall feeling of being 'scattered'.

The main contributor to this is likely stress.

One of the reasons that stress contributes to our lack of focus is because during stress we use more of the vitamins known for energy and concentration such as Vitamin C, Zinc, Magnesium and B Vitamins.

When we are not stressed and overloaded, we can usually consume enough of these vitamins through a general well-rounded diet, however when we are burning more than we are consuming this can impact focus, memory recall and reduce energy levels.

Stress can also lead to higher levels of inflammation and oxidative stress ⁽¹⁾, when we think of inflammation, we usually associate that with muscular pain or joint soreness etc, however the brain is not immune to being affected by systemic inflammation.

So, what can we do about this?

It is recommended you review the following foods that are known to be high in Vitamin C, Zinc, Magnesium, Omega-3 and B Vitamins (specifically B3, B6, B9, B12) and incorporate them into your meal planning.

As this is an extensive list of foods, it is recommended to simply make sure you include at least one food from each nutrient in your daily diet, you will find there are some foods that contain a range of these nutrients, making it easier to incorporate more into your daily food routine.

(1) Oxidative stress is an imbalance between free radicals (Free radicals are unstable molecules or atoms that can damage the cells in your body) and antioxidants in your body. Free radicals are oxygen-containing molecules with an uneven number of electrons. The uneven number allows them to easily react with other molecules.

NUTRIENT	FOODS
Vitamin B3 – Niacin	Peanuts, tuna, pork, turkey, barley flour, lam & portabello mushrooms
Vitamin B6 – Pyroxidine	Turkey, rice bran, acai berry, pistachios, sunflower seeds, chicken breast, tuna, prune juice, squash & bluefish
Folate (B9)	Lentils, asparagus, pinto beans, sunflower seeds, leafy green vegetables
Vitamin B12 - Cobalamin	<p>Steamed clams and muscles, Mackerel, crab, beef, salmon, rockfish, eggs, brie cheese.</p> <p>Vegetarians; Recommend regular consumption of eggs and brie cheese.</p> <p>Vegan; A vegan friendly B12 supplement may be needed. As B12 can be synthesised by certain bacteria this is readily available over the counter. We recommend a sublingual (mouth) spray for increased absorption.</p>
Vitamin C	Red capsicum, Kiwi fruit, Brussel Sprouts, strawberries and oranges (organic)
Magnesium	Cashews, artichokes, pinto beans, halibut (fish), banana
Zinc	Oysters, adzuki beans, pumpkin seeds, whey protein, sunflower seeds, blackbeans, swisse cheese,
Omega-3	<p>Herring, Mackerel, Salmon, Sardines, Oysters, Trout, Tuna, Crab.</p> <p>Vegetarian and Vegan Sources;</p> <p>Flaxseed oil, Chia seeds, Walnuts, ground Flaxseeds, Walnuts and Walnut Oil, Soybean oil, Mustard Oil, firm Tofu</p>

HERBS KNOWN TO INCREASE MEMORY AND FOCUS

There are a number of herbs that are evidenced to assist with increasing focus and memory through both traditional and scientific research.

Scroll through the herbs below and learn about how they may support you to improve your cognitive performance.

Green Tea (*Camellia sinensis*)

Green Tea is well known for its antioxidant properties. Previously in this handout we mentioned that oxidative stress can contribute to reduced memory and focus, therefore, the antioxidant properties of Green Tea may improve your ability to concentrate. It also contains L-theanine, an amino acid that is known to modulate brain function by reducing the stress response.

Ginkgo (*Ginkgo biloba*)

Similar to Green Tea, Ginkgo also has a high antioxidant affect, however, it is also well known for improving peripheral circulation, this meaning that it improves blood flow to the brain, bringing with it increased delivery of oxygen and the nutrients required for adequate cognitive function.

Brahmi (*Bacopa monnieri*)

In Ayurvedic medicine Brahmi has long been used as a cognition enhancer, this meaning it improves memory recall, performance and concentration. Recent studies have found that this herb provides a statistically significant improvement compared to placebo.

Brahmi is also known to increase neurotransmitter function that improves brain activity, particularly memory and recall, further it is known to relax excitatory mechanisms allowing one to focus in on a task at hand.

Ashwaganda (*Withania somnifera*)

This herb would be most beneficial for those that notice that they particularly struggle to focus in on and complete tasks during times of high stress and anxiety, it relaxes the sympathetic nervous system (fight, flight or freeze response) and therefore allows us to focus. Ashwaganda is also known to improve overall vitality.

Always consult with a Healthcare Professional before taking any nutritional or herbal supplements!