

News You Can Use

Bacopa Monnieri

Pubmed - Chronic effects of Brahmi (*Bacopa monnieri*) on human memory from the Department of Psychology, University of Wollongong, Wollongong, Australia.

A study is reported on the effects of Brahmi (*Bacopa monnieri*) on human memory. The results show a significant effect of the Brahmi on a test for the retention of new information. Follow-up tests showed that the rate of learning was unaffected, suggesting that Brahmi decreases the rate of forgetting of newly acquired information.

Some of the bacopa extract benefits to health were known in India several thousand years ago. There, it is known as "brahmi", a brain tonic. It is used to improve memory and learning problems, as well as concentration.

Bacopa monnieri plant is an herb used in India for memory enhancement. *Bacopa monnieri* is sometimes spelled as *Bacopa monniera* but the more accepted spelling is *monnieri*. *Bacopa* herb, a perennial succulent creeping herb with small green leaves, commonly grows in marshy areas throughout India. Its scientific name is *Bacopa monnieri*, although it is more commonly known in the West as 'herb-of-grace' or 'water hyssop'. *Bacopa* is a genus of 70-100 water-dwelling plants. They may be mistaken for water lilies and are commonly referred as water hyssops, although they are not related to the hyssop plants.



Bacopa monnieri is what is known in Ayurvedic (ancient Indian) medicine as a 'rasayana' - a plant that helps prevent aging and degeneration. In the case of *Bacopa monnieri*, this is used specifically to help fight the effects of aging on the brain.

Its benefits for maintaining brain health have been studied extensively. It is proving to be extremely effective as a brain stimulant - improving memory and cognitive abilities and helping to treat nervous tension, depression and stress.

These mind-enhancing properties make this herb particularly beneficial for those studying for exams, and also offer exciting potential in the treatment of serious memory disorders like Parkinson's and Alzheimer's.

Bacopa monnieri plays a dual role in boosting memory and fighting stress. The two main active ingredients in *Bacopa monnieri* - thought to be largely responsible for its

memory-boosting benefits - are the plant chemicals Bacopaside A and Bacopaside B. These are well-known antioxidants that help protect the brain's memory centers from free radical damage.

Researchers believe that *Bacopa monnieri* works by increasing the memory-boosting chemical, acetylcholine, in the brain. Acetylcholine is a neurotransmitter that carries messages between your brain cells and helps you retain new information.

Bacopa has been revered for centuries in the herbal tradition of India to enhance clear thinking and support memory function. Studies have shown that *Bacopa* supports learning and memory in humans. In animal models, *Bacopa monnieri* provides antioxidant protection for critical memory centers and helps to reduce the effects of stress on the brain. Traditional application suggests that *Bacopa* has a direct effect on improving brain functions, increasing concentration, and in promoting memory functions.

Bacopa monnieri plays a protective role in the synaptic functions of the nerves in the hippocampus, the seat of memory. Nerve impulses are transmitted across the synapses and their degeneration is believed to contribute to impaired memory and cognition.

Bacopa monnieri is an Ayurvedic medicine, clinically used for memory enhancing, epilepsy, insomnia and as a mild sedative. *Bacopa monnieri* showed a dose-dependent free radical scavenging capacity and a protective effect on DNA cleavage. The antioxidant capacity of *Bacopa monnieri* may explain, at least in part, the reported antistress, immunomodulatory, cognition-facilitating, anti-inflammatory and anti-aging effects produced by it in experimental animals and in clinical situations and may justify further investigation of its other beneficial properties. Moreover, this experimental evidence suggests that because of its antioxidant activity, *Bacopa monnieri* may be useful in the treatment of human pathologies in which free radical production plays a key role.

Reports have shown the anti-amnesic drug, *Bacopa monnieri* to be capable of alleviating diazepam induced memory deficits. It is used as a natural treatment for attention deficit hyperactivity disorder or ADHD.

In another animal study, researchers from the Industrial Toxicology Research Center in Lucknow, India, found that *Bacopa monnieri* also possesses anti-stress properties. It helped to lower concentrations of stress-related chemicals. These chemicals can quickly become unbalanced during times of stress, leaving you feeling less able to cope. By regulating levels of these chemicals in the brain, *Bacopa monnieri* helps promote better memory, reaction times and learning during stressful periods.

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Bacopa monniera, also referred to as *Bacopa monnieri*, *Herpestis monnieri*, water hyssop, and "Brahmi," has been used in the Ayurvedic system of medicine for centuries. Traditionally, it was used as a brain tonic to enhance memory development, learning, and concentration, and to provide relief to patients with anxiety or epileptic disorders. The plant has also been used in India and Pakistan as a cardiac tonic, digestive aid, and to improve respiratory function in cases of bronchoconstriction. Recent research has focused primarily on *Bacopa's* cognitive-

enhancing effects, specifically memory, learning, and concentration and results support the traditional Ayurvedic claims. Research on anxiety, epilepsy, bronchitis and asthma, irritable bowel syndrome, and gastric ulcers also supports the Ayurvedic uses of Bacopa. Bacopa's antioxidant properties may offer protection from free radical damage in cardiovascular disease and certain types of cancer."

More information and the results of a large number of in vitro, human, and animal studies on the following can be found at:

<http://www.wellcorps.com/Therapeutic-Effects-of-Bacopa-Monnieri.html>

Cognitive Effects

In this study, Bacopa has been shown to exhibit effects on Adults and Children for the following:

- *Anxiety and Depression*
- *Epilepsy*
- *Bronchitis and Asthma*
- *Gastrointestinal Disorders*
- *Cardiovascular Effects*
- *Hypothyroidism*

Side Effects and Toxicity

Therapeutic doses of Bacopa are not associated with any known side effects, and Bacopa has been used safely in Ayurvedic medicine for several hundred years. As with most herbs, it's best to take occasional breaks from use.



Nature's Sunshine proudly features Ginkgo/Gotu Kola w/Bacopa Conc. (60 tabs). Ginkgo is famed for boosting circulation to the brain. **Gotu kola** herb has been called "brain food" by many herbalists. **Bacopa** is from bacopin, an Ayurvedic compound that stimulates memory through non-specific pathways. Researchers theorize that bacopin allows the body to maintain old neurons and synthesize new neurons more quickly. **Bacopin may support memory and may help boost concentration.** This formula combines these two famous herbs with this nutrient to give you complete nutritional benefits in a powerful concentrate.

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Sincerely,

Chris Ritchason
Dr. Jack & Verlyn Ritchason, Founders
The Back to Herbs Team

References

<http://www.thehealthierlife.co.uk/natural-health-articles/mental-health/bacopa-monieri-anxiety-memory-00933.html>

<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/12093601>

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<http://www.raysahelian.com/bacopa.html>

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