GABA for ADD—and More

New research from Japan indicates that a new approach to attention deficit disorder (ADD) may be on the horizon. The compound studied is a natural form of the brain chemical gamma-aminobutyric acid (GABA).

Recently, studies have indicated that enhancing GABA activity may be beneficial in improving mental performance in children and may also be helpful in treating ADD and promoting better brain and mental health at all ages. Low levels or decreased GABA function in the brain is associated with several psychiatric and neurological disorders, but most primarily anxiety, depression, insomnia, and epilepsy. But rather than rely on drugs to accomplish this goal, a natural form of GABA known as PharmaGABA may be the best approach.

A Better Way to Supplement with GABA

GABA has been available as a dietary supplement in the United States for decades. However, there is a new form of GABA that is considerably more effective than other forms that is naturally manufactured via a fermentation process that utilizes Lactobacillus hilgardii—the bacteria used to ferment vegetables in the preparation of the traditional Korean dish kimchi. In contrast, the synthetic form of GABA is produced from pyrrolidinone—a compound not allowed for use in Japan because it's considered a dangerous substance. The GABA content of synthetic GABA is about 99.6 percent, the remaining amount consisting of pyrrolidinone, a compound of questionable safety.

Natural forms of GABA are approved for use in Japan as an aid to conquer stress and promote relaxation. Natural GABA is a very popular ingredient in functional foods and beverages as well as dietary supplements designed to produce mental and physical relaxation, without inducing drowsiness.

How GABA Enhances Mental Performance

Recently, a study was conducted in Japan by researchers from the Kyorin University Medical School, which involved 60 sixth graders. The students were divided into two groups and received either 100 mg of PharmaGABA or a placebo. The students then took a math test and were also evaluated for signs and feelings of stress. The results were quite dramatic. The average number of answers given by the PharmaGABA group was 20 percent higher than the placebo group, and the number answered correctly also increased by 20 percent. These results indicate that PharmaGABA helped the kids not only think faster, but also get more answers right.

The study also looked at some important markers of stress. These markers included measuring the amount of a stress-related hormone in the saliva as well as how much anxiety the children were experiencing during the study. Both subjective and objective measures of stress indicated the PharmaGABA group were considerably more relaxed and focused than the placebo group.

DOSAGE RECOMMENDATIONS

Natural forms of GABA, like PharmaGABA, can be used not only to improve mental focus and clarity, but also for situational stress, more pervasive feelings of anxiety, or as a sleep enhancer. The typical dosage is 100 to 200 mg up to three times daily. As a general guideline, avoid taking more than 1,000 mg within a 4-hour period and no more than 3,000 mg within a 24 hour period.

Michael T. Murray, ND, is widely regarded as one of the leading authorities on natural medicine. He is the author of many books. His latest book is What the Drug Companies Won't Tell You and Your Doctor Doesn't Know.
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GABA and Brain Waves
The results of the aforementioned study are intriguing. The effects of PharmaGABA on brain physiology appear to be quite similar to the effects of meditation and prayer in producing a more relaxed-but-focused state. This effect has significant implications for a wide range of health conditions. Future studies will undoubtedly shed more light on the value of natural GABA in these various applications. For now, there is no question that it can be used very successfully during stressful times to increase feelings of calmness and improve mental focus, which may be beneficial to children who have issues with hyperactivity and/or focus. It is extremely safe with no known side effects or drug interactions.

go shopping!

Natural Factors Stress-Relax PharmaGABA

Natural Factors Stress-Relax PharmaGABA is a naturally produced form of the brain compound gamma-aminobutyric acid in a chewable, fruit-flavored tablet. Clinical studies have shown PharmaGABA helps to increase the production of alpha brain waves to create a sense of physical relaxation while maintaining mental focus.

Source Naturals GABA 750 mg
Source Naturals GABA 750 mg GABA has an inhibitory effect on the firing of neurons and supports a calm mood. Source Naturals GABA is synthesized directly from glutamic acid and contains no yeast, dairy, egg, or soy.

Solgar GABA 500 mg
Solgar GABA 500 mg Each vegetarian-friendly capsule provides 500 mg of gamma-aminobutyric acid, known to calm mood, promote a relaxed state, and boost brain power and ability to concentrate.