

Ginkgo biloba is probably not of benefit for cognitive impairment and dementia

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| Clinical question | Is Ginkgo biloba an effective treatment for cognitive impairment and dementia? |
| Bottom line | There is no convincing evidence that Ginkgo biloba is efficacious for cognitive impairment and dementia. |
| Caveat | Many of the early trials which suggested beneficial effects were small, used unsatisfactory methods, and publication bias cannot be excluded. Two of the most recent trials which were also amongst the largest trials, found no difference between placebo and Ginkgo biloba. |
| Context | Extracts from the leaves of the maidenhair tree, Ginkgo biloba, have long been used in China as a traditional medicine for various conditions. A standardized extract is widely used for the treatment of a range of conditions, including memory and concentration problems, confusion, depression, anxiety, tinnitus and headache. |
| Cochrane Systematic Review | Birks J et al. Ginkgo biloba for cognitive impairment and dementia. Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews, 2007. Issue 2, Art. No: CD003120. DOI:10.1002/14651858.CD003120.pub2. This review contains 35 studies ranging in size from 14 to 513 participants. |
| Pearls No. 41 January 2008, written by Brian R McAvoy | |

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