



ALMA MATER STUDIORUM
UNIVERSITÀ DI BOLOGNA

ARCHIVIO ISTITUZIONALE
DELLA RICERCA

Alma Mater Studiorum Università di Bologna Archivio istituzionale della ricerca

The role of diet in preventing and reducing cognitive decline

This is the final peer-reviewed author's accepted manuscript (postprint) of the following publication:

Published Version:

Angeloni, C., Businaro, R., Vauzour, D. (2020). The role of diet in preventing and reducing cognitive decline. *CURRENT OPINION IN PSYCHIATRY*, 33(4), 432-438 [10.1097/YCO.0000000000000605].

Availability:

This version is available at: <https://hdl.handle.net/11585/878406> since: 2023-09-15

Published:

DOI: <http://doi.org/10.1097/YCO.0000000000000605>

Terms of use:

Some rights reserved. The terms and conditions for the reuse of this version of the manuscript are specified in the publishing policy. For all terms of use and more information see the publisher's website.

This item was downloaded from IRIS Università di Bologna (<https://cris.unibo.it/>).
When citing, please refer to the published version.

(Article begins on next page)

This is the final peer-reviewed accepted manuscript of:

Angeloni, Cristina; Businaro, Rita; Vauzour, David. The role of diet in preventing and reducing cognitive decline. *Current Opinion in Psychiatry* 33(4):p 432-438, July 2020.
| DOI: 10.1097/YCO.0000000000000605

The final published version is available online at:

<https://dx.doi.org/10.1097/YCO.0000000000000605>

Terms of use:

Some rights reserved. The terms and conditions for the reuse of this version of the manuscript are specified in the publishing policy. For all terms of use and more information see the publisher's website.

This item was downloaded from IRIS Università di Bologna (<https://cris.unibo.it/>)

When citing, please refer to the published version.

The role of diet in preventing and reducing cognitive decline

Cristina Angeloni¹, Rita Businaro² and David Vauzour^{3}*

¹ School of Pharmacy, University of Camerino, 62032 Camerino, Italy;
cristina.angeloni@unicam.it

² Department of Medico-Surgical Sciences and Biotechnologies, Sapienza University of Rome, Italy; rita.businaro@uniroma1.it

³ Norwich Medical School, Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, University of East Anglia, Norwich NR4 7UQ, United Kingdom. D.Vauzour@uea.ac.uk

Correspondence should be addressed to:

Dr David Vauzour, Norwich Medical School, Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences,
University of East Anglia, Norwich NR4 7UQ, United Kingdom. Email:
D.Vauzour@uea.ac.uk; Tel. +44(0)1603 591732; Fax: +44 (0)1603 593752

ABSTRACT

Purpose of Review

This review summarizes the most recent evidence regarding the effects of diet in preventing and reducing age-related cognitive decline and neurodegenerative diseases.

Recent Findings

Recent evidence indicates that nutraceuticals and whole diet approaches may protect against the development of age-related cognitive decline and pathological neurodegeneration. The neuroprotective effects are diverse depending on the nutrient employed and may involve a reduction of neuroinflammation, an activation of the endogenous antioxidant defence system and a modulation of the gut microbiota structure and function.

Summary

This review summarizes the existing evidence in favour of diet as a viable alternative approach to directly impact cognitive decline and neurodegenerative disease. The single nutrient (polyphenols, B vitamins, long-chain polyunsaturated fatty acids) versus whole diet approach (Mediterranean diet, DASH, MIND, Nordic, ketogenic) is presented and discussed. Potential mechanisms of action underlying the beneficial effects of these diets are also described. Implementation of large-scale preventive interventions based on dietary patterns identified as being beneficial to brain health should be a research and public health priority, ideally in conjunction with other health-promoting lifestyle factors.

Keywords: Brain, Alzheimer's disease, nutrition, ageing, dementia

INTRODUCTION

It has been estimated that 50 million people worldwide suffer from Alzheimer's disease (AD), the most common type of dementia. If no breakthrough can be made to prevent the disease or delay its onset, the number of patients is anticipated to reach 152 million by 2050 (1). Assuming a curvilinear association between age and dementia risk, a 2 year delay in onset would reduce population incidence by 22% by 2047 (2), resulting in 25 million fewer cases worldwide (3). Existing drug treatments for neurodegenerative conditions rarely curtail the underlying disease processes, and consequently there is an urgent need to develop alternative strategies to directly prevent, slow, and even stop neurodegeneration. Lifestyle strategies such as nutritional interventions have potential to be a safe, cheap, and effective alternative to protect against age-related cognitive decline and neurodegeneration, resulting in significant personal and societal benefits (4). This review aims to summarise the existing evidence in favour of diet either in form of nutraceuticals or whole diet as a viable alternative approach to directly impact cognitive decline and neurodegenerative disease. Some mechanistic considerations will also be described.

NUTRACEUTICALS

Accumulating evidence indicates that nutraceuticals such as polyphenols, B vitamins, polyunsaturated fatty acids (PUFAs) and other nutritional components can have beneficial effects on cognitive impairment associated to normal aging and/or neurodegenerative diseases like AD. We will describe below the impact of such nutritional components on brain functions.

Polyphenols

Polyphenols are a large family of phytochemicals widely distributed in the plant kingdom and present in fruits, vegetables, nuts, seeds, flowers and other plants used for human

consumption. They can be classified according to the number of phenol rings presented and the structural components that bind these rings in phenolic acids (hydroxycinnamic and hydroxybenzoic acids), flavonoids (benzene rings) and less common stilbene and lignans, although other categorizations exist (5). Previous research has demonstrated that different purified polyphenols such as resveratrol, curcumin, anthocyanin, ferulic acid, catechin and epicatechin were able to prevent cognitive decline in experimental animal models of aging and degenerative diseases (6-10). A plethora of observational and intervention studies observed a positive correlation between cognitive decline and the supplementation of different products rich in polyphenols like cocoa, berries, green tea and grape (11-15). However, not all studies investigating the effects of polyphenols on cognitive decline reported positive results. A recent meta-analysis of 34 clinical trials concluded that although some polyphenols might improve specific markers of cognitive status, definitive recommendations for the use of these compounds in the prevention of cognitive decline are currently not applicable (16). This is partly due to differences between individuals in the absorption, distribution, metabolism and excretion of bioactive compounds (17) as well as to heterogeneity in their biological response (18). The major determinants responsible for the between-subject variability may include genetic (Single Nucleotide Polymorphisms) and non-genetic factors (gut microbiota composition, sex, age, dietary habits, etc) which are only beginning to be explored and may differ depending on the compounds (19).

B-Vitamins

B vitamins have been suggested to have a positive effect on cognitive functions thanks to their ability to counteract the increase of homocysteine during aging that is related to cognitive impairment (20, 21). A randomized, double blind, placebo controlled study that involved 818 participants aged 50–70 years, evidenced that a supplementation of 800 µg/day of folic acid significantly improved domains of cognitive function that tend to decline

with age (22). The clinical trial (VITACOG) demonstrated that B-vitamin supplementation (folic acid 0.8 mg, vitamin B₆ 20 mg, vitamin B₁₂ 0.5 mg) for 2 years in participants aged 70 years and over with MCI reduced average brain atrophy rate (23, 24), ameliorated global cognition, episodic memory and semantic memory (25). Furthermore, the Singapore Chinese Health Study including 16,948 participants showed that higher dietary intakes of riboflavin and folate in midlife were associated with a lower risk of cognitive impairment in later life in the Chinese population (26). However, a recent meta-analysis evidenced conflicting results on cognitive outcomes of B-vitamin supplementations due to the great variability of the existing trials in terms of type of supplementations, population sampled, study quality, and duration of treatment (27).

Long chain polyunsaturated fatty acids (LC-PUFAs)

Neuronal cell membranes are particularly enriched in LC-PUFAs, important for the optimal development and function of the brain and the nervous system (28). The two most important types of LC-PUFAs in the human brain are eicosapentaenoic acid (EPA: 20:5 ω -3) and docosahexaenoic acid (DHA: 22:6 ω -3) (29). Although different studies evidenced an association between endogenous low levels of omega-3 and cognitive impairment and Alzheimer's disease (30, 31), the effects of ω -3 LC-PUFAs supplementation on cognitive outcomes in randomized clinical trials remain controversial. In a randomized, double-blind, placebo-controlled study, healthy older adults (62-80 years) with subjective memory impairment receiving 2.4 g/d PUFAs for 24 weeks induced an increase in working memory performance (32). The administration of DHA-enriched meals to subjects (n = 75; 88.5 \pm 0.6 years) with cognitive impairment, living in nursing homes, protected against age-related cognitive decline (33). On the other hand, in a recent very large trial involving 1680 participants, a daily dose of 800 mg DHA and 225 mg EPA had no significant effects on cognitive decline over 3 years in elderly people aged 70 years or older with memory

impairment (34). A meta-analysis of prospective cohort studies found no statistical evidence for an inverse association between ω -3 LC-PUFAs intake and risk of dementia or AD (35). Yassine et al. (36) suggested that the different outcomes of the ω -3 supplementations studies on cognitive decline may be, in part, explained by the interactions among DHA, *APOE* genotype, and stage of AD pathologic changes. They demonstrated that DHA supplementation in predementia but not in AD dementia may reduce the risk for or delay the onset of AD symptoms in *APOE4* carriers.

DIETARY PATTERNS

An increasing number of studies are highlighting the synergic effect of different natural compounds when administered in combination (37-39). Taking into account the complex biological mixture of different components of the diet, it has been suggested that the use of a diet approach rather than the supplementation of single components might help to prevent/counteract cognitive decline in elderly people.

Mediterranean diet

The Mediterranean diet (MeDi), the traditional dietary pattern followed by people residing on the shores of the Mediterranean Sea, is characterized by a high intake of vegetables, legumes, fruits, cereals, fish, and extra virgin olive oil, moderate consumption of alcohol and low-to moderate intake of meat and dairy products. It is undoubtedly the most extensively studied dietary pattern, and more and more evidence suggest a potential protective role against cognitive decline and dementia.

Two clinical trials (40, 41), part of the larger trial PREDIMED (42), investigated the effect of MeDi in combination with nuts or extra virgin olive oil (EVOO) and found improved cognitive function with the MeDi supplemented with either EVOO oil or nuts vs. low-fat diet. These trials, despite having a realistically long follow-up (4.1–6.5 years), have the limitation to

consider relatively few participants. The key role of EVOO in relation to the positive effects of the MeDi was reinforced by the findings of Mazza et al. (43) who observed improved cognitive functions in elderly following the MeDi in which all the oils were substituted with EVOO for 1 year in respect to subjects following the MeDi alone.

Different meta-analyses evidenced a positive effect of MeDi on cognitive function. In particular, Sofi et al. (44) reported a 13% reduced risk of neurodegenerative diseases in individuals who most adhered to the MeDi. Similarly, Psaltopoulou et al. (45) evidenced that moderate and high adherence to MeDi is consistently associated with reduced risk for cognitive impairment. However, not all the studies totally agreed on the MeDi positive effects on cognition. A systematic review reported that most of the randomized controlled trials published until 2018 found no significant association between MeDi and reduction of cognitive decline, and very few showed a small effect sizes (46). However, significant and clinically meaningful effect sizes were found for cognitive composites in the largest and most robust trial, indicating promising scope for future well-designed trials.

DASH diet

The Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension (DASH) diet was initially designed to prevent hypertension and is relatively low in saturated fat, total fat, and cholesterol; moderately high in protein; and high in minerals and fibres (47). Of the three studies which investigated the effect of DASH diet on cognitive function in the elderly, two studies reported a positive outcome (48, 49), meanwhile one did not evidence any effects (50). In particular, a study including 923 elderly men and women reported modest but positive links between the highest tertile of DASH diet adherence and lower rates of AD (49). The Nurse's Health Study observed that a higher adherence to DASH diet was associated with improved global cognition and verbal memory (48). On the contrary, the Women's Health Initiative Memory Study (WHIMS) (50) reported that DASH diet adherence was not associated with a lower

incidence of MCI or dementia in old women. The impact of DASH diet on cognition is just beginning to be explored and further research is necessary before we could draw solid conclusion.

MIND diet

The MIND diet is a combination of the MeDi and DASH diets but with slight modifications taking into account the best evidence for neuroprotection. Three cohort studies evidenced a positive effect of MIND diet on cognitive function. For example, Morris et al. showed that MIND diet score was associated with a slower rate of cognitive decline equivalent to 7.5 years of younger age among the participants in the top third of MIND diet scores compared with the lowest third (51). In a subsequent study, they found that high and moderate adherence to MIND diet was associated with a decrease in AD risk (49). The US Nurse's Health Study investigated the effect of the MIND diet on 16,058 older women aged 70 and over for 6 years and found that long-term adherence to the MIND diet was moderately associated with better verbal memory in later life, but not association was evidenced with global cognition, verbal memory or telephone interview of cognitive status (52). Future studies using the MIND diet should be conducted within populations at greater risk of cognitive decline.

Nordic diet

The Nordic diet attempts to reflect the diet consumed in Nordic countries and is characterized by high intakes of fish, apples and pears, cabbages, root vegetables, whole grains from oat, barley and rye, berries, low-fat dairy products, potatoes and rapeseed oil (53). A large population-based cohort study that followed a total of 2223 dementia-free adults aged ≥ 60 for 6 years observed that moderate to high adherence to Nordic diet was more closely associated with less cognitive decline than moderate to high adherence to the

other healthful dietary pattern such as MeDi, DASH and MIND (54). Another study carried out in subjects aged 57–78 years revealed that better adherence to the Nordic diet had been associated with higher scores in global cognition over a 4-year study period after adjustment for demographic and lifestyle factors in individuals with normal cognition (55). Consumption of a Nordic diet appears to display a positive association with cognition in individuals with normal levels of cognition, however, whether such might improve cognition in population with cognitive decline remains to be established.

Ketogenic diet

In the last years, different studies suggested the ketogenic diet (KD), characterized by high fat, moderate protein and very low carbohydrate composition, as a tool to prevent the consequences of age-related cognitive decline. In aged rats the KD improved cognitive performance under normoxic and hypoxic conditions, meanwhile motor performance where not affected (56). Two studies carried out in mice found that KD initiated in young adulthood extend midlife longevity and improve cognition (57, 58). A recent study, observed that a late-life KD intervention improved behaviour on both the elevated figure-8 maze alternation task and on cognitive dual task that required working memory while simultaneously performing a bi-conditional association task in rats (59). Such data were recently confirmed in a preliminary human study, demonstrating that the generation of even trace ketones might enhance episodic memory and patient-reported vitality in very early AD (60). Future studies are however necessary to confirm these preliminary results.

MECHANISMS UNDERLYING THE IMPACT OF DIET

Several studies support a relationship between neuroinflammation and nutrients, foods or dietary patterns, taking into account the synergistic or antagonistic biochemical interactions among nutrients as well as the different food sources of the same nutrient. Natural

antioxidant compounds found in plant foods and particularly those found in berries (such as strawberry, blueberry, blackcurrant, blackberry, blueberry and mulberry) have been proposed to exert a multiplicity of neuroprotective actions within the brain, including a potential to protect neurons against injury induced by neurotoxins, an ability to suppress neuroinflammation and a potential to promote memory, learning, and cognitive functions (61-63). Whether the dietary bioactive compounds can cross the Blood Brain Barrier (BBB) in order to play a direct anti-inflammatory or pro-inflammatory effect on microglia and/or other Central Nervous System (CNS) cells is still unclear. Another hypothesis is that they may trigger a peripheral reaction that indirectly induces a CNS response. The subsequent synthesis of cytokines may drive microglia polarization and promote immune-to-brain signalling (64).

The ketogenic diet, originally developed for the treatment of epilepsy in non-responder children, is spreading to be used in the treatment of many diseases, including older adults at risk for AD (65). The main activity of the ketogenic diet has been related to improved mitochondrial function and decreased oxidative stress. beta-Hydroxybutyrate, the most studied ketone body, has been shown to reduce the production of reactive oxygen species (ROS), and to improve mitochondrial metabolism. In particular, it stimulates the cellular endogenous antioxidant system with the activation of nuclear factor erythroid-derived 2-related factor 2 (Nrf2), modulates the ratio between the oxidized and reduced forms of nicotinamide adenine dinucleotide (NAD⁺/NADH) and increases the efficiency of electron transport chain through the expression of uncoupling proteins. Furthermore, the ketogenic diet performs anti-inflammatory activity by inhibiting nuclear factor kappa-light-chain-enhancer of activated B cells (NF-κB) and the nucleotide-binding domain, leucine-rich-containing family, pyrin domain-containing-3 (NLRP3) inflammasome as well as by inhibiting histone deacetylases (HDACs), therefore improving memory encoding (66, 67).

In order to combat oxidative stress and produced ROS, ascorbic acid and vitamin E have been extensively used. Whilst their combined use has provided positive results, the single use of ascorbic acid, despite encouraging results obtained in vitro and in vivo, has not proven to be particularly useful in the treatment of AD, although its deficiency plays an important role in accelerating amyloid accumulation (68). Ascorbic acid also affects inflammaging by decreasing the amount of IL-6 and IL-8, two cytokines involved in the production of ROS (69, 70).

Research over the past two decades has indicated that the gut microbiome and its interaction with dietary compounds have important implications for human health (71). Polyphenols, for example, favour the growth of beneficial symbiotic bacteria and counteract the growth of pathogens (61). Similarly, omega-3 fatty acids and KD were also reported to affect microbiota composition and function in middle-aged, healthy volunteers (72) and MCI patients respectively (73). Mechanisms may involve the production of short-chain fatty acids (SCFAs), branched-chain amino acids, and gut hormones. SCFAs, including acetate, butyrate, propionate, and lactate, can enter the circulatory system, and it is plausible that they may signal to the brain via this route (74).

CONCLUSION

Much evidence underlines the importance of diet in promoting health; it has been shown that nutritional protocols can direct the course and the outcomes of different pathologies affecting the central nervous system. The implementation of clinical trials will confirm the effectiveness of nutritional protocols developed not only for a specific disease but also for the demands of every single patient. Implementation of large-scale preventive interventions based on dietary patterns identified as being beneficial to brain health should be a research and public health priority, ideally in conjunction with other health-promoting lifestyle factors.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

None

FINANCIAL SUPPORT AND SPONSORSHIP

Sapienza Ateneo 2018 to Rita Businaro

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

None

KEY POINTS

- Dietary interventions are effective strategies against age-related cognitive decline and neurodegeneration
- Individual nutritional components such as polyphenols, B-vitamins and long chain polyunsaturated fatty acids can have beneficial effects on cognitive performance
- Different dietary patterns are suggested to exert a positive effect against cognitive decline in the elderly
- Mechanisms may involve a reduction in neuroinflammation, an increase in endogenous antioxidant defence and a modulation of the gut microbiota structure and function.
- Research should focus on large-scale preventive interventions ideally in conjunction with other health-promoting lifestyle factors.

REFERENCES

1. Alzheimer's Disease International. World Alzheimer Report 2019: Attitudes to dementia Alzheimer's Disease International (ADI), London; 2019.
2. Brookmeyer R, Gray S, Kawas C. Projections of Alzheimer's disease in the United States and the public health impact of delaying disease onset. *Am J Public Health.* 1998;88(9):1337-42.
3. Prince M, Bryce R, Albanese E, Wimo A, Ribeiro W, Ferri CP. The global prevalence of dementia: a systematic review and metaanalysis. *Alzheimers Dement.* 2013;9(1):63-75 e2.
4. Vauzour D, Vafeiadou K, Rodriguez-Mateos A, Rendeiro C, Spencer JP. The neuroprotective potential of flavonoids: a multiplicity of effects. *Genes Nutr.* 2008;3(3-4):115-26.
5. Abbas M, Saeed F, Anjum FM, Afzaal M, Tufail T, Bashir MS, et al. Natural polyphenols: An overview. *Int J Food Prop.* 2017;20(8):1689-99.
6. Mori T, Koyama N, Tan J, Segawa T, Maeda M, Town T. Combined treatment with the phenolics (-)-epigallocatechin-3-gallate and ferulic acid improves cognition and reduces Alzheimer-like pathology in mice. *J Biol Chem.* 2019;294(8):2714-31.
7. Sevastre-Berghian AC, Făgărăsan V, Toma VA, Bâldea I, Olteanu D, Moldovan R, et al. Curcumin Reverses the Diazepam-Induced Cognitive Impairment by Modulation of Oxidative Stress and ERK 1/2/NF-. *Oxid Med Cell Longev.* 2017;2017:3037876.

8. Qi Y, Shang L, Liao Z, Su H, Jing H, Wu B, et al. Intracerebroventricular injection of resveratrol ameliorated A β -induced learning and cognitive decline in mice. *Metab Brain Dis.* 2019;34(1):257-66.
9. Song N, Zhang L, Chen W, Zhu H, Deng W, Han Y, et al. Cyanidin 3-O- β -glucopyranoside activates peroxisome proliferator-activated receptor- γ and alleviates cognitive impairment in the APP(swe)/PS1(Δ E9) mouse model. *Biochim Biophys Acta.* 2016;1862(9):1786-800.
10. Rendeiro C, Vauzour D, Rattray M, Waffo-Tégouo P, Mérillon JM, Butler LT, et al. Dietary levels of pure flavonoids improve spatial memory performance and increase hippocampal brain-derived neurotrophic factor. *PLoS One.* 2013;8(5):e63535.
11. Lee J, Torosyan N, Silverman DH. Examining the impact of grape consumption on brain metabolism and cognitive function in patients with mild decline in cognition: A double-blinded placebo controlled pilot study. *Exp Gerontol.* 2017;87(Pt A):121-8.
12. Devore EE, Kang JH, Breteler MM, Grodstein F. Dietary intakes of berries and flavonoids in relation to cognitive decline. *Ann Neurol.* 2012;72(1):135-43.
13. Letenneur L, Proust-Lima C, Le Gouge A, Dartigues JF, Barberger-Gateau P. Flavonoid intake and cognitive decline over a 10-year period. *Am J Epidemiol.* 2007;165(12):1364-71.
14. Barrera-Reyes PK, de Lara JC, Gonzalez-Soto M, Tejero ME. Effects of Cocoa-Derived Polyphenols on Cognitive Function in Humans. Systematic Review and Analysis of Methodological Aspects. *Plant Foods Hum Nutr.* 2020.

*15. Philip P, Sagaspe P, Taillard J, Mandon C, Constans J, Pourtau L, et al. Acute Intake of a Grape and Blueberry Polyphenol-Rich Extract Ameliorates Cognitive Performance in Healthy Young Adults During a Sustained Cognitive Effort. *Antioxidants (Basel)*. 2019;8(12).

This paper reports the acute supplementation with a blueberry and grape polyphenol rich extract to be efficient at improving cognitive performance and in particular working memory and attention during a highly effortful cognitive challenge

*16. Poti F, Santi D, Spaggiari G, Zimetti F, Zanotti I. Polyphenol Health Effects on Cardiovascular and Neurodegenerative Disorders: A Review and Meta-Analysis. *Int J Mol Sci*. 2019;20(2).

This is the first meta-analysis investigating polyphenols effects only in the prevention of cognitive decline. Studies enrolling patients already affected by dementia were not considered.

17. Cassidy A, Minihane AM. The role of metabolism (and the microbiome) in defining the clinical efficacy of dietary flavonoids. *Am J Clin Nutr*. 2017;105(1):10-22.

18. Espín JC, González-Sarrías A, Tomás-Barberán FA. The gut microbiota: A key factor in the therapeutic effects of (poly)phenols. *Biochem Pharmacol*. 2017;139:82-93.

19. Manach C, Milenkovic D, Van de Wiele T, Rodriguez-Mateos A, de Roos B, Garcia-Conesa MT, et al. Addressing the inter-individual variation in response to consumption of plant food bioactives: Towards a better understanding of their role in healthy aging and cardiometabolic risk reduction. *Mol Nutr Food Res*. 2017;61(6).

20. Farina N, Jernerén F, Turner C, Hart K, Tabet N. Homocysteine concentrations in the cognitive progression of Alzheimer's disease. *Exp Gerontol.* 2017;99:146-50.
21. Beydoun MA, Beydoun HA, Gamaldo AA, Teel A, Zonderman AB, Wang Y. Epidemiologic studies of modifiable factors associated with cognition and dementia: systematic review and meta-analysis. *BMC Public Health.* 2014;14:643.
22. Durga J, van Boxtel MP, Schouten EG, Kok FJ, Jolles J, Katan MB, et al. Effect of 3-year folic acid supplementation on cognitive function in older adults in the FACIT trial: a randomised, double blind, controlled trial. *Lancet.* 2007;369(9557):208-16.
23. Smith AD, Smith SM, de Jager CA, Whitbread P, Johnston C, Agacinski G, et al. Homocysteine-lowering by B vitamins slows the rate of accelerated brain atrophy in mild cognitive impairment: a randomized controlled trial. *PLoS One.* 2010;5(9):e12244.
24. Douaud G, Refsum H, de Jager CA, Jacoby R, Nichols TE, Smith SM, et al. Preventing Alzheimer's disease-related gray matter atrophy by B-vitamin treatment. *Proc Natl Acad Sci U S A.* 2013;110(23):9523-8.
25. de Jager CA, Oulhaj A, Jacoby R, Refsum H, Smith AD. Cognitive and clinical outcomes of homocysteine-lowering B-vitamin treatment in mild cognitive impairment: a randomized controlled trial. *Int J Geriatr Psychiatry.* 2012;27(6):592-600.
26. Sheng LT, Jiang YW, Pan XF, Feng L, Yuan JM, Pan A, et al. Association between Dietary Intakes of B Vitamins in Midlife and Cognitive Impairment in Late-Life: the Singapore Chinese Health Study. *J Gerontol A Biol Sci Med Sci.* 2019.

27. Ford AH, Almeida OP. Effect of Vitamin B Supplementation on Cognitive Function in the Elderly: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis. *Drugs Aging*. 2019;36(5):419-34.
28. Luchtman DW, Song C. Cognitive enhancement by omega-3 fatty acids from childhood to old age: findings from animal and clinical studies. *Neuropharmacology*. 2013;64:550-65.
29. Bos DJ, van Montfort SJ, Oranje B, Durston S, Smeets PA. Effects of omega-3 polyunsaturated fatty acids on human brain morphology and function: What is the evidence? *Eur Neuropsychopharmacol*. 2016;26(3):546-61.
30. Lukaschek K, von Schacky C, Kruse J, Ladwig KH. Cognitive Impairment Is Associated with a Low Omega-3 Index in the Elderly: Results from the KORA-Age Study. *Dement Geriatr Cogn Disord*. 2016;42(3-4):236-45.
31. Söderberg M, Edlund C, Kristensson K, Dallner G. Fatty acid composition of brain phospholipids in aging and in Alzheimer's disease. *Lipids*. 1991;26(6):421-5.
32. Boespflug EL, McNamara RK, Eliassen JC, Schidler MD, Krikorian R. Fish Oil Supplementation Increases Event-Related Posterior Cingulate Activation in Older Adults with Subjective Memory Impairment. *J Nutr Health Aging*. 2016;20(2):161-9.
33. Hashimoto M, Kato S, Tanabe Y, Katakura M, Mamun AA, Ohno M, et al. Beneficial effects of dietary docosahexaenoic acid intervention on cognitive function and mental health of the oldest elderly in Japanese care facilities and nursing homes. *Geriatr Gerontol Int*. 2017;17(2):330-7.

34. Andrieu S, Guyonnet S, Coley N, Cantet C, Bonnefoy M, Bordes S, et al. Effect of long-term omega 3 polyunsaturated fatty acid supplementation with or without multidomain intervention on cognitive function in elderly adults with memory complaints (MAPT): a randomised, placebo-controlled trial. *Lancet Neurol.* 2017;16(5):377-89.
35. Wu S, Ding Y, Wu F, Li R, Hou J, Mao P. Omega-3 fatty acids intake and risks of dementia and Alzheimer's disease: a meta-analysis. *Neurosci Biobehav Rev.* 2015;48:1-9.
36. Yassine HN, Braskie MN, Mack WJ, Castor KJ, Fonteh AN, Schneider LS, et al. Association of Docosahexaenoic Acid Supplementation With Alzheimer Disease Stage in Apolipoprotein E ϵ 4 Carriers: A Review. *JAMA Neurol.* 2017;74(3):339-47.
37. Marrazzo P, Angeloni C, Hrelia S. Combined Treatment with Three Natural Antioxidants Enhances Neuroprotection in a SH-SY5Y 3D Culture Model. *Antioxidants (Basel).* 2019;8(10).
38. Davinelli S, Di Marco R, Bracale R, Quattrone A, Zella D, Scapagnini G. Synergistic effect of L-Carnosine and EGCG in the prevention of physiological brain aging. *Curr Pharm Des.* 2013;19(15):2722-7.
39. Royston KJ, Udayakumar N, Lewis K, Tollefsbol TO. A Novel Combination of Withaferin A and Sulforaphane Inhibits Epigenetic Machinery, Cellular Viability and Induces Apoptosis of Breast Cancer Cells. *Int J Mol Sci.* 2017;18(5).
40. Valls-Pedret C, Sala-Vila A, Serra-Mir M, Corella D, de la Torre R, Martínez-González M, et al. Mediterranean Diet and Age-Related Cognitive Decline: A Randomized Clinical Trial. *JAMA Intern Med.* 2015;175(7):1094-103.

41. Martínez-Lapiscina EH, Clavero P, Toledo E, Estruch R, Salas-Salvadó J, San Julián B, et al. Mediterranean diet improves cognition: the PREDIMED-NAVARRA randomised trial. *J Neurol Neurosurg Psychiatry*. 2013;84(12):1318-25.

42. Estruch R, Ros E, Salas-Salvadó J, Covas MI, Corella D, Arós F, et al. Primary prevention of cardiovascular disease with a Mediterranean diet. *N Engl J Med*. 2013;368(14):1279-90.

*43. Mazza E, Fava A, Ferro Y, Rotundo S, Romeo S, Bosco D, et al. Effect of the replacement of dietary vegetable oils with a low dose of extravirgin olive oil in the Mediterranean Diet on cognitive functions in the elderly. *J Transl Med*. 2018;16(1):10.

This is the first study investigating the short-term effect of a low dose of extravirgin olive oil on cognitive performances in the elderly.

44. Sofi F, Abbate R, Gensini GF, Casini A. Accruing evidence on benefits of adherence to the Mediterranean diet on health: an updated systematic review and meta-analysis. *Am J Clin Nutr*. 2010;92(5):1189-96.

45. Psaltopoulou T, Sergentanis TN, Panagiotakos DB, Sergentanis IN, Kostis R, Scarmeas N. Mediterranean diet, stroke, cognitive impairment, and depression: A meta-analysis. *Ann Neurol*. 2013;74(4):580-91.

46. Radd-Vagenas S, Duffy SL, Naismith SL, Brew BJ, Flood VM, Fiatarone Singh MA. Effect of the Mediterranean diet on cognition and brain morphology and function: a systematic review of randomized controlled trials. *Am J Clin Nutr*. 2018;107(3):389-404.

47. Appel LJ, Moore TJ, Obarzanek E, Vollmer WM, Svetkey LP, Sacks FM, et al. A clinical trial of the effects of dietary patterns on blood pressure. DASH Collaborative Research Group. *N Engl J Med.* 1997;336(16):1117-24.
48. Berendsen AAM, Kang JH, van de Rest O, Feskens EJM, de Groot LCPG, Grodstein F. The Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension Diet, Cognitive Function, and Cognitive Decline in American Older Women. *J Am Med Dir Assoc.* 2017;18(5):427-32.
49. Morris MC, Tangney CC, Wang Y, Sacks FM, Bennett DA, Aggarwal NT. MIND diet associated with reduced incidence of Alzheimer's disease. *Alzheimers Dement.* 2015;11(9):1007-14.
50. Haring B, Wu C, Mossavar-Rahmani Y, Snetselaar L, Brunner R, Wallace RB, et al. No Association between Dietary Patterns and Risk for Cognitive Decline in Older Women with 9-Year Follow-Up: Data from the Women's Health Initiative Memory Study. *J Acad Nutr Diet.* 2016;116(6):921-30.e1.
51. Sofi F, Macchi C, Abbate R, Gensini GF, Casini A. Mediterranean diet and health status: an updated meta-analysis and a proposal for a literature-based adherence score. *Public Health Nutr.* 2014;17(12):2769-82.
52. Berendsen AM, Kang JH, Feskens EJM, de Groot CPGM, Grodstein F, van de Rest O. Association of Long-Term Adherence to the MIND Diet with Cognitive Function and Cognitive Decline in American Women. *J Nutr Health Aging.* 2018;22(2):222-9.

53. Hansen CP, Overvad K, Kyrø C, Olsen A, Tjønneland A, Johnsen SP, et al. Adherence to a Healthy Nordic Diet and Risk of Stroke: A Danish Cohort Study. *Stroke*. 2017;48(2):259-64.
54. Shakersain B, Rizzuto D, Larsson SC, Faxén-Irving G, Fratiglioni L, Xu WL. The Nordic Prudent Diet Reduces Risk of Cognitive Decline in the Swedish Older Adults: A Population-Based Cohort Study. *Nutrients*. 2018;10(2).
55. Männikkö R, Komulainen P, Schwab U, Heikkilä HM, Savonen K, Hassinen M, et al. The Nordic diet and cognition--The DR's EXTRA Study. *Br J Nutr*. 2015;114(2):231-9.
56. Xu K, Sun X, Eroku BO, Tsisis CP, Puchowicz MA, LaManna JC. Diet-induced ketosis improves cognitive performance in aged rats. *Adv Exp Med Biol*. 2010;662:71-5.
57. Roberts MN, Wallace MA, Tomilov AA, Zhou Z, Marcotte GR, Tran D, et al. A Ketogenic Diet Extends Longevity and Healthspan in Adult Mice. *Cell Metab*. 2017;26(3):539-46.e5.
58. Newman JC, Covarrubias AJ, Zhao M, Yu X, Gut P, Ng CP, et al. Ketogenic Diet Reduces Midlife Mortality and Improves Memory in Aging Mice. *Cell Metab*. 2017;26(3):547-57.e8.
59. Hernandez AR, Hernandez CM, Campos K, Truckenbrod L, Federico Q, Moon B, et al. A Ketogenic Diet Improves Cognition and Has Biochemical Effects in Prefrontal Cortex That Are Dissociable From Hippocampus. *Front Aging Neurosci*. 2018;10:391.

*60. Brandt J, Buchholz A, Henry-Barron B, Vizthum D, Avramopoulos D, Cervenka MC. Preliminary Report on the Feasibility and Efficacy of the Modified Atkins Diet for Treatment of Mild Cognitive Impairment and Early Alzheimer's Disease. *J Alzheimers Dis.* 2019;68(3):969-81.

This is the first clinical trial examining whether older adults with Alzheimer's disease can adhere to a modified Atkins diet and produce ketone bodies without supplementation with oral medium-chain-triglyceride fats.

61. Flanagan E, Muller M, Hornberger M, Vauzour D. Impact of Flavonoids on Cellular and Molecular Mechanisms Underlying Age-Related Cognitive Decline and Neurodegeneration. *Curr Nutr Rep.* 2018;7(2):49-57.

62. Miquel S, Champ C, Day J, Aarts E, Bahr BA, Bakker M, et al. Poor cognitive ageing: Vulnerabilities, mechanisms and the impact of nutritional interventions. *Ageing Res Rev.* 2018;42:40-55.

63. Vauzour D, Camprubi-Robles M, Miquel-Kergoat S, Andres-Lacueva C, Banati D, Barberger-Gateau P, et al. Nutrition for the ageing brain: Towards evidence for an optimal diet. *Ageing Res Rev.* 2017;35:222-40.

64. Businaro R, Corsi M, Asprino R, Di Lorenzo C, Laskin D, Corbo RM, et al. Modulation of Inflammation as a Way of Delaying Alzheimer's Disease Progression: The Diet's Role. *Curr Alzheimer Res.* 2018;15(4):363-80.

**65. Neth BJ, Mintz A, Whitlow C, Jung Y, Solingapuram Sai K, Register TC, et al. Modified ketogenic diet is associated with improved cerebrospinal fluid biomarker profile,

cerebral perfusion, and cerebral ketone body uptake in older adults at risk for Alzheimer's disease: a pilot study. *Neurobiol Aging*. 2019.

This paper elegantly demonstrates that the Mediterranean-ketogenic diet intervention is associated with improved CSF AD biomarker profile, improved peripheral lipid and glucose metabolism, increased cerebral perfusion, and increased cerebral ketone body uptake. Such results suggest that a ketogenic intervention targeted toward adults at risk for Alzheimer's may prove beneficial in the prevention of cognitive decline.

66. McDonald TJW, Cervenka MC. Ketogenic Diets for Adult Neurological Disorders. *Neurotherapeutics*. 2018;15(4):1018-31.

67. Pinto A, Bonucci A, Maggi E, Corsi M, Businaro R. Anti-Oxidant and Anti-Inflammatory Activity of Ketogenic Diet: New Perspectives for Neuroprotection in Alzheimer's Disease. *Antioxidants (Basel)*. 2018;7(5).

68. Dixit S, Bernardo A, Walker JM, Kennard JA, Kim GY, Kessler ES, et al. Vitamin C deficiency in the brain impairs cognition, increases amyloid accumulation and deposition, and oxidative stress in APP/PSEN1 and normally aging mice. *ACS Chem Neurosci*. 2015;6(4):570-81.

69. Gonzalez-Fuentes J, Selva J, Moya C, Castro-Vazquez L, Lozano MV, Marcos P, et al. Neuroprotective Natural Molecules, From Food to Brain. *Front Neurosci*. 2018;12:721.

70. Monacelli F, Acquarone E, Giannotti C, Borghi R, Nencioni A. Vitamin C, Aging and Alzheimer's Disease. *Nutrients*. 2017;9(7).

71. Long-Smith C, O'Riordan KJ, Clarke G, Stanton C, Dinan TG, Cryan JF. Microbiota-Gut-Brain Axis: New Therapeutic Opportunities. *Annu Rev Pharmacol Toxicol*. 2020;60:477-502.

72. Watson H, Mitra S, Croden FC, Taylor M, Wood HM, Perry SL, et al. A randomised trial of the effect of omega-3 polyunsaturated fatty acid supplements on the human intestinal microbiota. *Gut*. 2018;67(11):1974-83.

*73. Nagpal R, Neth BJ, Wang S, Craft S, Yadav H. Modified Mediterranean-ketogenic diet modulates gut microbiome and short-chain fatty acids in association with Alzheimer's disease markers in subjects with mild cognitive impairment. *EBioMedicine*. 2019;47:529-42.

This paper reports the gut microbiota signature in MCI subjects compared to healthy controls and describes the ability of a modified Mediterranean-Ketogenic diet to alter the gut microbiota composition

74. Sarkar A, Lehto SM, Harty S, Dinan TG, Cryan JF, Burnet PWJ. Psychobiotics and the Manipulation of Bacteria-Gut-Brain Signals. *Trends Neurosci*. 2016;39(11):763-81.