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Safety and effectiveness of a traditional ginkgo fresh plant extract - results from a clinical trial.

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Abstract

BACKGROUND: In Chinese medicine, **Ginkgo biloba** is used for a variety of indications. In the current study, the safety and efficacy of a traditional fresh plant extract was investigated in patients with mild cognitive impairment.

PATIENTS AND METHODS: 59 elderly patients were treated for 6 weeks with a twice daily tablet containing 90 mg of fresh plant **Ginkgo biloba** extract. The patients suffered from age-related mild cognitive impairment of the non-Alzheimer type assessed by the DemTect score and the presence of symptoms, such as forgetfulness, **memory** problems, and difficulties in concentration. At the end of the treatment period, safety was primarily assessed by the occurrence of adverse events and efficacy by the DemTect score, the SF-12 quality of life questionnaire, and the change in cognitive symptoms, as well as the judgment of the investigators and patients.

RESULTS: At the final visit, the SF-12 mental score had increased significantly from 48.3 +/- 10.1 to 51.3 +/- 7.9, whereas the SF-12 body score (44.5 +/- 9.2 to 45.3 +/- 8.1) and the DemTect score (15.9 +/- 2.0 to 16.0 +/- 2.3) had not changed significantly. About half of all patients experienced an improvement in their **memory** and their ability to concentrate, as well as a decrease in symptoms of forgetfulness. The majority of investigators and patients judged the treatment to be effective. The tablets were very well tolerated and, as a treatment for their cognitive impairment, highly accepted (90% would take them again).

CONCLUSION: This newly developed, holistic fresh leaf extract of **Ginkgo biloba** is a safe, effective, and, at least, adjuvant treatment option for patients with mild cognitive impairments.

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