

Studies Show Benefits of Pycnogenol, ALA, ALC and Vitamin D

There have been several interesting studies recently published in medical literature. For example, there was a study published in the November 2007 issue of the journal *Nutrition Research*¹ regarding French maritime pine bark known by the trade name of Pycnogenol. In this study, 37 patients with poor joint function were randomized to receive 150 mg of Pycnogenol daily or placebo for three months. At the end of the study, those individuals supplemented with Pycnogenol reported a reduction in pain, stiffness and physical limitation that ranged anywhere from 43% to 52%. Interestingly, those people in the Pycnogenol group reported a significant decrease in their use of non-steroidal, anti-inflammatory drugs along with COX2 inhibitors. The researchers speculated that the pine bark extract's effect may be due to its antioxidant and inflammation reducing properties.

I have mentioned Pycnogenol numerous times in prior newsletters because of other positive studies that confirm its wide ranging health benefits. These benefits include reducing muscle cramps in the elderly, athletes and people with poor circulation at 200 mg per day and also reducing the discomfort related to change of life issues experienced by women at 200 mg per day. I have included links to the prior newsletters for your convenience:

There was a wonderful animal study just published in the November 2007 edition of *The FASE Journal*². In this study, researchers took a group of beagle dogs, between the ages of 7.6 and 8.8 years old and supplemented their diets with twice daily doses of alpha lipoic acid (ALA) and acetyl-L carnitine (ALC) over approximately a two month period. The dogs that were given the supplements made significantly fewer errors in learning compared to a group of dogs given placebo. The researchers noted that these supplements provided evidence of the effectiveness in improving discrimination and spatial learning. They suggested that long term maintenance on ALA and ALC may be effective in decreasing age-related cognitive decline by slowing the rate of mitochondrial decay and cellular aging.

Finally, there was a study published in the October 2007 edition of the journal *Diabetes Care*³. Approximately 4,000 men and women were followed during a 17-year period. It was found that those individuals who had higher blood levels of vitamin D had a 40% decrease incidence of developing elevated blood sugar compared to those with lower levels of vitamin D.

This week's newsletter is short but sweet. I especially enjoyed the article on the ALA and ALC since as a neurologist I treat cognitive decline on a daily basis. I've been recommending these two nutrients to many of my patients. Nutraceutical Sciences Institute® (NSI®) offers several different products containing acetyl-L carnitine (ALC) and alpha lipoic acid (ALA), either as stand-alone, in combination or with co-enzyme Q10. The CoQ10, ALC and ALA and the ALC and ALA combo products have 4.7 out of 5 star ratings with 100% of customers saying they would recommend them to others.

I recommend taking 2,000 mg of ALC, 600 mg of ALA and 200 – 1,200 mg of CoQ10 every day for optimal neurological and cardiovascular health. We also offer Pycnogenol and the customer reviews of 5 out of 5 stars confirm that the benefits in real life agree with what we are reading about in the medical studies. Clearly the studies indicate 150 to 200 mg per day

is the optimal dosage. I have included several customer reviews below. And, of course, don't forget vitamin D, one of the increasing hero nutrients that have come to light in the last several years. I recommend 2,000 IU to 4,000 IU per day of the D3 form based on the most recent studies. You will also notice the NSI® vitamin D3 product has 5 out of 5 stars ratings with 100% of customers recommending it to others.

1. Farid R, Mirfeizi Z, Mirheidari M, Rezaieyazdi Z, Mansouri H, Esmaili H, Zibadi S, Rohdewald P and Watson RR, **Pycnogenol supplementation reduces pain and stiffness and improves physical function in adults with knee osteoarthritis**, *Nutrition Research* (Elsevier), November 2007, Volume 27, Issue 11, Pages 692-697.
2. Milgram NW, Araujo JA, Hagen TM, Treadwell BV, Ames BN, **Acetyl-L-carnitine and alpha-lipoic acid supplementation of aged beagle dogs improves learning in two landmark discrimination tests**, *The FASEB Journal*, 2007;21:3756-3762.
3. Mattila C, Knekt P, Männistö S, Rissanen H, Laaksonen MA, Montonen J and Reunanen A, **Serum 25-Hydroxyvitamin D Concentration and Subsequent Risk of Type 2 Diabetes**, *Diabetes Care*, 30:2569-2570, 2007.

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