

Vitamin B Shown to Protect Against Brain Shrinkage

Source: Natural Products News

Scientists at Oxford University have shown that consuming B vitamins can dramatically reduce brain shrinkage in later life and potentially protect against Alzheimer's disease.

In a study of 156 patients with mild cognitive impairment – a precursor to Alzheimer's – those people who took vitamin B supplements suffered 50% less brain shrinkage than those given a placebo. Crucially, shrinkage was reduced by 90% in areas of the brain most vulnerable in Alzheimer's patients.

Dr David Smith who led the study said: "Our work shows that a key part of the disease that leads to Alzheimer's disease, the atrophy of specific brain regions, might be modified by a safe and simple intervention."

Commenting on the research in *Natural Products* magazine, the nutritionist and founder of the Brain Bio Centre, Patrick Holford, said that the levels of B vitamins needed to protect against brain shrinkage could not be achieved through diet. "You have to supplement. For example, the basic recommended daily amount (RDA) of B12 is 1mcg while the level that stops brain shrinkage is 500mcg. This dose is completely safe, but means taking specific homocysteine lowering supplements, not just any multivitamin or B complex."