

Research Shows That Sage Can Help Preserve or Enhance Memory and Brain Functions

By: P. Simard, Natural News

Sage, scientifically known as *Salvia officinalis*, comes from the latin word *salvere* which basically means to be saved. During the 10th century, Arab physicians thought sage promoted immortality, while in the 14th century, Europeans would use it to protect themselves from witchcraft. Although these old beliefs may seem like pure fantasy to most, it's not surprising that sage was actually named herb of the year by the International Herb Association back in 2001.

Sage comes from countries surrounding the Mediterranean Sea and has been utilized for thousands of years. This great medicinal herb is from the mint (*Labiatae*) family and, just like rosemary; it contains a variety of volatile oils, flavonoids and phenolic acids.

This well regarded medicinal herb definitely has incredible health benefits if only taking into account its strong anti-oxidant and anti-inflammatory properties, although the most interesting aspect about this wonderful herb seems to be the research that has led specialists to believe it could be a major player in preserving or optimizing brain functions.

Some of the other specific properties that are well recognized and associated to the use of sage include reducing excessive perspiration and lowering blood sugar levels in diabetics.

Do you know someone afflicted by memory loss or Alzheimer's disease? If so, have you ever considered sage to help their condition?

In June 2003, the journal, *Pharmacology Biochemistry and Behavior*, published some quite revealing results from research done with sage. A study was conducted in order to verify sage's true potential as a memory enhancer. The scientists had 45 adults on hand for two separate trials. Some of the individuals were given a placebo while others had essential oil extracts made of sage, with doses varying between 50 to 150 microls. Memory tests were performed by the participants, 1 to 6 hours following the intakes. In each trial, even the smallest amounts of sage were enough for participants to notably improve their memory.

During the September 2003 British Pharmaceutical Conference in Harrogate, Professor Peter Houghton presented compelling information about research that showed how *salvia miltiorrhiza* or Chinese sage could possibly help treat Alzheimer's disease, or at the very least, be an interesting alternative to the usual pharmaceutical drugs. Dr. Houghton elaborated on how sage's active compounds, similar to those employed in prescribed drugs, were capable of somewhat neutralizing Alzheimer's disease.

In the experiment, scientists discovered that certain isolated compounds from a sage extract were found to be *acetylcholinesterase (AChE)* inhibitors. Generally, Alzheimer's disease displays an increase of *AChE* that leads to loss of memory by depleting the *cholinergic and noncholinergic* neurons of the brain. By stopping any increase in *AChE*, sage provides a serious therapeutic option instead of the conventional pharmaceutical *AChE* inhibitors.

Sources for this article include:

<http://www.whfoods.com>

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