

THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



1513 Can Wasabi Improve Your Memory?

If you find yourself forgetting things and you worry that it's only going to get worse, I may have a solution that you've never thought of. What if I told you that regularly adding wasabi into your regimen would make a difference in your cognitive recall ability? Yes, wasabi. I'm Jerry Roberts, and I've got details next on The Extra Point.

An intriguing study out of Japan is hot new for people interest in memory issues, and overall brain function.

The research suggests that the green stuff we get when we eat sushi and sashimi may have other benefits besides mixing well with soy sauce. Science now tells us that wasabi contains compounds that improve cognitive recall.

The study was performed at Tohoku University in Japan and appears in the journal, *Nutrients*. Researchers said they recruited 72 Japanese adults for the program.

Unfortunately, the test subjects weren't fed massive amounts of sashimi, sushi, or anything else. Instead, they were given either a daily tablet containing a biochemical known as 6-MSITC, which is found in wasabi, or a placebo tablet which didn't have it, for a period of 12 weeks.

Participants were tested to measure four areas of cognitive function both before and after the 12-week period, including working memory, attention, processing speed, and episodic memory.

That refers to a type of long-term memory that involves the recollection of specific events, experiences, or episodes from one's personal past. This includes the context, time, place, emotions, and associated details with the event.

Some examples of episodic memory include recalling your high school graduation ceremony, remembering a family vacation, or recalling a conversation you had with a friend. Episodic memory plays a crucial role in forming a

person's identity, as it allows individuals to remember and reflect upon their personal history and experiences. You'll no doubt agree that losing these memories over time would reduce the quality of life for everyone.

The results of the tests were interesting. Both the patients taking the wasabi tablets and the placebo experienced improved working memory and episodic memory. That being said, the wasabi-tablet participants saw an 18 percent higher episodic memory recall.

What's next? Likely, more studies with wasabi. Perhaps the next one will be a much broader program with hundreds, if not thousands of participants.

Will they get larger wasabi projects funded? I'm not sure. If it turns out that a compound in the hot green stuff really does make a major difference, would Big Pharma be able to make big bucks, given that people could just grab a plate of sushi or sashimi for a tasty memory-enhancing meal?

With so many more people living into their 80s and 90s, and beyond, there is a growing fear that neurodegenerative disease will ruin their chance to enjoy their later years.

Wasabi now potentially joins the list of other food items such as mushrooms, cinnamon, dark chocolate, and all kinds of vegetables that have beneficial qualities for boosting our brain function. Make great memories, and maybe pile on the wasabi if you want to keep them.

That's the Extra Point. Be responsible and make something good happen today. For 93.3FM, the Ray Gibson Show, and First Hawaiian Bank, I'm Jerry Roberts.

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