

Twelve weeks of supplementation with vitamins and minerals was found to boost the attention scores of children, according to results published in the *British Journal of Nutrition*.

Multivitamin/mineral supplementation may improve aspects of brain function in healthy children

It is well known that adequate levels of vitamins, minerals and other nutrients are essential for optimal neural functioning. A significant percentage of individuals, including children, suffer from deficiencies in one or more vitamins or minerals. This study investigated whether daily supplementation with a multivitamin could alter cognitive performance and mood in healthy children.

The randomized, double-blind, placebo-controlled study included 81 healthy children aged 8-14. The children were reportedly all healthy and free from food allergies. None of the children used other dietary supplements during the three months prior to the study. Participants were randomly assigned to daily multivitamin and mineral supplements or placebo for 12 weeks.

The children underwent laboratory assessments of their cognitive performance and mood pre-dose and at 1 and 3 h post-dose on the first and last days of the trial. Assessments were also completed at home after 4 and 8 weeks at 3 hours post-dose. Cognitive performance was measured using a battery of laboratory assessments, which included tasks assessing mood and the speed and accuracy of attention and aspects of memory. The children in the vitamin/mineral group performed more accurately on two tests of attention. No effects were observed on measures of the children's mood.

Although the results of this study require further investigation, it suggests that vitamin/mineral supplementation has the potential to improve brain function in healthy children.

Haskell CF et al. Cognitive and mood effects in healthy children during 12 weeks' supplementation with multivitamin/minerals. *Br J Nutr* 2008 Nov;100(5):1086-96.