



Dr's Substack

Ginkgo: The Great Debate

And why my good friend wants me to give up writing...

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Ginkgo: The Great Bleeding Debate (And My Accidental Brain Boost)

For Your Eyes Only! (But Your Brain Gets VIP Access Too)

Welcome to the herb world's equivalent of a courtroom drama! Today's defendant: Ginkgo biloba, accused of causing bleeding episodes and generally being a troublemaker. The prosecution has case reports! The defense has controlled studies! And I have a confession that might steal the whole show.

The Plot Twist: When You Forget Why You're Smart

Here's my embarrassing-but-hilarious confession: I started taking Ginkgo for my eyes (because apparently my retinas needed some TLC after the whole bleeding episode saga from my last post). But then I forgot. I literally forgot what I was taking it for.

What I DID notice was that my brain suddenly felt like it had been upgraded from Windows 95 to the latest operating system. I was sharper, more precise, more focused. It was the first time I'd ever tried Ginkgo, and boom – accidental cognitive enhancement!

TSA note: This might be the most perfect testimonial ever: "Ginkgo works so well, I forgot I was taking it... but remembered everything else better!"

The Science: What Ginkgo Actually Does for Your Peepers

Before we dive into the controversy, let's talk about why Ginkgo earned its "eye herb" reputation:

The Good News for Your Retinas:

- Decreases lipid peroxidation (fancy talk for "stops your cells from rusting")
- Improves blood viscosity and elasticity (makes your blood flow like fine wine instead of ketchup)
- Enhances retinal capillary blood flow (those tiny eye highways get better traffic flow)
- Supports red blood cell function (your cellular delivery trucks work better)

The Vision Victories: Studies show Ginkgo can improve visual acuity, field of vision, near and far sight, and even color recognition. Additionally, it enhances the functioning of higher brain centers associated with vision, which explains why I suddenly felt like I had high-definition thinking.

The Great Bleeding Controversy: Court is in Session!

The Prosecution's Case: Between 1996 and 2006, 21 case reports linked Ginkgo to episodes of bleeding. The medical community collectively gasped and started eyeing this ancient herb suspiciously, as if it were carrying a concealed weapon.

The Defense's Counter-Attack: But wait! When researchers actually did proper controlled studies:

- 50 healthy male volunteers took 240 mg/day of Ginkgo extract
- NONE of the 29 coagulation and bleeding parameters showed any evidence of problems
- Four controlled studies found no additional bleeding risk when Ginkgo was combined with aspirin or warfarin

The German Database Drop: The most compelling evidence? A massive German database of 320,644 patients showed that the bleeding risk with Ginkgo preparations was around 1, meaning people taking Ginkgo had the SAME bleeding risk as people not taking it.

Plot twist: The herb might be innocent!

The Real Tea on Those Case Reports

Here's where it gets interesting. Those scary case reports from the 90s and 2000s? They were messier than a toddler's art project:

- Poor documentation of what products people actually took
- Missing info on standardization and dosing
- Most patients had other risk factors for bleeding
- No clear causality established

It's like blaming the mailman for your divorce just because he delivered bills on the same day your spouse left. Correlation isn't causation, people!

The Disclaimer Dance (Because Lawyers Exist)

The US National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine still advises caution if you're on blood thinners, have bleeding disorders, or are scheduled for surgery. And honestly? That's probably smart. Better safe than sorry, even if the evidence is shakier than we once thought.

Always consult your healthcare provider – especially if you're on medications like warfarin. This isn't medical advice; it's medical journalism with a sense of humor.

My Personal Eye (and Brain) Protocol

For my retinal microcirculation, I use these Medi-Herb formulas from Standard Process:

1. Ginkgo Forte tablets (2/day)

2. Bilberry Forte (3-4 tablets)
3. Gotu Kola Complex tablets (3-4)

Yes, quality herbs are expensive. Yes, this is a hefty dose. But my eyes (and apparently my brain) are worth it. Plus, the accidental cognitive boost was like getting a free upgrade to business class! Or order a slightly different all-in-one from Moss below.

The Bottom Line

Ginkgo's reputation as a bleeding risk might be more myth than reality, at least based on the controlled studies. But what are the benefits for circulation, vision, and brain function? Those seem pretty solid. Sometimes the controversy makes better headlines than the actual science.

Just remember: if you start taking Ginkgo and suddenly forget why you're taking it but feel brighter than ever, that might actually be the point!

My good friend, a professional journalist, occasionally comments on my writing skills. I think this person would prefer that I stick to clinical practice. Give me a sign of love in the heart to let me know if you want me to keep posting short updates! Or better yet, subscribe.

This concludes our eye health mini-series, but don't worry – we've got more adventures ahead! Future posts will cover cataracts, glaucoma, essential eye nutrients, the microbiome (simplified for us mere mortals), and my integrative physician's approach to Parkinson's.

Special shout-out to my darling patients Jan C. and Carolyn W. – I love you both and appreciate all your support!

We offer a 15% discount to Substack readers via Dr. Yoho's (Surviving Healthcare) Fullscript store:

<https://us.fullscript.com/welcome/yohosapocalypsestore/store-start>. Because spreading wellness is what it's all about—quality nutrients at a discount.

Please email me at drsanta@vitalenergynutrition.com

Would you like me to send you the information to order VascuSelect with Ginkgo, Mango whole fruit powder (not regular mango), and Grape seed extract from **Moss Nutrition** at a discount? It is what I use every day for my eyes, retina, and microcirculation.

Remember: This post is not only non-profit but profit-free. Any TSA profits are allocated to World Vision programs, including well-building (to construct six wells), supporting two children, and providing microloans.

Remember: **[Always Be Humble And Kind.](#)**

See the following video at Microbiomelabs.com

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KIRAN KRISHNAN

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