

Ginkgo biloba may not benefit memory

by UPI

CORVALLIS, Ore. - U.S. researchers say further studies are needed to determine if there is any benefit, or harm, to the elderly in taking ginkgo biloba. The researchers conducted a three-year study involving 118 people over age 85 with no memory problems. Half took ginkgo biloba extract three times a day and half took a placebo. The study, published online in the journal *Neurology*, found 21 people developed mild memory problems; 14 of those had taken the placebo and seven the ginkgo extract. Although there was a trend favoring ginkgo, the difference was not statistically significant. However, researchers also found seven people taking ginkgo biloba had strokes or transient ischemic attacks known as mini-strokes, while none of those taking the placebo did. "Ginkgo has been reported to cause bleeding-related complications, but the strokes in this case were due to blood clots, not excessive bleeding, and were generally not severe," study author Hiroko Dodge of Oregon State University, in Corvallis, said in a statement. "These results need to be clarified with larger studies, but the findings are interesting because ginkgo biloba is already widely used, readily available, and relatively inexpensive," said Dodge.

© 2008 United Press International. All Rights Reserved.

Ginkgo biloba may not benefit memory by UPI