

# CONNECTIONS AND DISCONNECTIONS OF *NIGELLA SATIVA* OIL IN ALCOHOL INDUCED BEHAVIORAL DEFICITS IN MALE WISTAR RATS

**Beenish Asrar, Judith Homberg and Darakhshan J Haleem**

Radboud University Medical Center, Netherlands  
PCMD-ICCBS, University of Karachi, Pakistan

There are many factors that can prevent or promote one's chances for the development of diseases. One example is alcohol use. Alcohol consumption remains part of our social milieu. Harmful alcohol use is a significant public health problem that often begins early in adult life. Globally, an estimated 2 billion people drink alcohol and 76 million have alcohol use disorders (AUD). Amongst a range of organ damage outcomes, chronic alcohol abuse and particularly binge-type alcoholism causes neuropathological sequelae leading to brain dysfunction and dementia. Due to this, alcohol is known to have effects on memory and other cognitive functions in humans and animals. Anxiety disorders frequently co-occur with alcohol-use disorders (AUDs), with 75% of individuals that abuse alcohol having a current or previous diagnosis of an anxiety disorder. *Nigella sativa* (NS) plant seeds are called black cumin or black seeds. *Nigella sativa* oil (NSO) has several physiological and pharmacological properties that can improve the behaviour and systems. As the attractive dietary approaches towards disease prevention involve inexpensive and low risk substances, one of the purpose of this study is to explore the ability of dietary supplementation of black cumin oil to prevent alcohol induced detrimental behaviour like anxiety and memory impairment. To explore the effects of NSO, male Wistar rats were used and divided into water and alcohol groups and given water or alcohol in drinking bottles for 28 days. NSO was administered by oral gavage. Animals weighted daily and behavioural measurements (weekly) and sacrificed. Brain and blood were collected and immediately frozen for molecular markers associated with behaviour like dementia.

**Findings:** Alcohol showed significant reduction in weight, weaken memory and anxiety level compared to water drinking animals. NSO treatment improved behaviour in alcohol drinking animals by enhancing the memory and reducing the anxiety but in water drinking animals NSO improved the memory only. Effects of NSO treatment on weight were not significant in both the groups.

**Conclusion & Significance:** *Nigella sativa* oil is capable of enhancing memory. It can significantly ameliorate the anxiety caused by chronic alcohol consumption.

beenish.asrar@radboudumc.nl  
beenish.phdns4@iiu.edu.pk