

Citicoline

Natural therapy for mood, memory, and addiction

Citicoline is a supplement with numerous benefits in the brain. It has been studied in people with depression, including bipolar depression, who also abused cocaine or stimulants (such as methamphetamine). In those studies it reduced drug abuse and improved memory and mood.

It has been used to treat dementia, Parkinson's disease, traumatic head injury, glaucoma, and stroke.

Citicoline helps protect the brain by improving the structure of brain cell membranes. It also enhances neurotransmitters involved in mood and memory including norepinephrine, dopamine, serotonin and acetylcholine.

Although it is natural, there are not good food sources for citicoline.

Dosage

Citicoline is started as:

Week 1: 500mg daily

Week 2: 1,000mg daily

Week 3: 1,500mg daily

Then continue at: 2,000mg (or 2gm) daily.

The dose can be taken all at once or spread throughout the day, with or without food.

Choosing a product

Citicoline can be hard to find but is available online (e.g. www.amazon.com, www.drugstore.com). It can cost from \$40-90 per month.

We don't endorse specific brands as we do not have a way to evaluate them directly. Aim for one that comes as 500mg capsules (many come as 250mg). A reasonably priced option that was tested for purity by ConsumerLabs is:

Cognizin Citicoline 500 Mg 60 Caps by Bestvite

(about \$2/day at www.amazon.com, product ASIN: B00KYU726G).

For in-store purchases, try A & S Natural Health in Winston-Salem (336) 774-8600 or call your local vitamin and natural health stores.

Side effects, risks, and drug interactions

Citicoline is safe and well tolerated. Compared to a sugar-pill it had no side effects. Citicoline does not appear to interact with other medications.

Quick links to recommended products
www.chrisaikenmd.com/supplements

Limitations

Citicoline has not been widely studied. Its safety is not regulated by the FDA.

References

Brown ES et al, A randomized, placebo-controlled trial of citicoline add-on therapy in outpatients with bipolar disorder and cocaine dependence. *J Clin Psychopharmacol.* 2007 Oct;27(5):498-502.

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—Chris Aiken, MD, updated 7/6/2025