

# Calming Essentials™

Natural support for promoting calm and focus\*



BRAIN/ COGNITION



Calming Essentials™ features GABA (gamma-aminobutyric acid) and L-theanine, both of which are well-regarded for promoting mental and emotional calm without impairing focus and attention.\*

## GABA

GABA is the main inhibitory or calming neurotransmitter in the central nervous system. Being an inhibitory neurotransmitter, GABA slows down the activity of nerve cells and prevents them from over-firing. GABA is a critical calming agent for the body, helping to combat stress and occasional anxious feelings. The body produces GABA, but additional supplementation may be helpful for those with difficulty coping with stressful situations. Owing to its role in supporting mental calm without bringing drowsiness, GABA may be beneficial for promoting mental clarity, focus and concentration during academic or athletic endeavors.\* (Athletes refer to this as being "in the zone.") Supplementation with GABA may help support the parasympathetic nervous system, which is responsible for a variety of involuntary bodily processes involved in relaxation—the "rest and digest" part of the nervous system, which balances the sympathetic nervous system's "fight or flight" activity.

## Anxiety

GABA's role as an inhibitory neurotransmitter is paramount. A study of over 1200 students in China looked at the association between behavioral problems and neurotransmitter deficiencies in adolescents. It was determined that deficiencies in neurotransmitters such as GABA may cause behavioral and mental/emotional issues, including those of anxiety and depression. Brain waves are analyzed in order to learn how the brain reacts to real life situations. Alpha waves are produced during meditation and anytime the body is relaxed but alert. Beta waves, on the other hand, are seen in situations of high stress and when there's difficulty focusing and concentrating. A small EEG study showed that one hour after oral GABA administration, alpha waves were increased while beta waves were decreased, indicating that GABA may help to induce relaxation and reduce anxiety.<sup>3</sup> It is believed that GABA supplementation elicits these results by activating the parasympathetic nervous system, a division of the autonomic nervous system responsible for a variety of involuntary bodily processes involved in relaxation ("rest and digest," the balance to the sympathetic nervous system's "fight or flight").

## GABA for Academics & Athletics

Owing to GABA's effect on the parasympathetic nervous system and its ability to facilitate increased production of alpha brain waves, supplementation with GABA may be beneficial in situations requiring a relaxed state of mind. A relaxed mind may allow for clear thinking and better focus and concentration. In this respect, GABA has been found to be of benefit in academics, in helping to improve learning capacity. GABA was given to elementary school students in Japan, to examine its relaxing effect and its potential to improve students' learning. Results showed that GABA suppressed the secretion of CgA (salivary chromogranin A; secreted in times of psychological stress), demonstrating reduced stress at the time of learning. An increased accuracy rate of testing was also observed, as well as a significant reduction in tension toward learning (as measured by a Manifest Anxiety Scale). Researchers concluded that GABA was effective in improving students' learning efficiency and in helping to improve students' test results. (Unpublished data provided by Pharma Foods International Co. Ltd.) This concept also holds true with respect to athletic performance. Athletes refer to this state of mind as being "in the zone," where their ability to relax and focus leads to a greater level of concentration on their performance and a reduction in pre-competition nervousness. For details on additional uses for GABA, including for addictions (such as to drugs or alcohol) and promoting restful sleep, see the Designs for Health tech sheet for PharmaGABATM.

## Benefits of Calming Essentials™

- Rapid uptake, starting in the mouth
- Effective, efficient absorption in the body
- Longer circulation in the body for effective nutrient delivery

## Who May Benefit From Calming Essentials™

- Those with increased levels of stress and anxiety
- Individuals who are easily agitated and frustrated
- Conditions associated with hypervigilance and/or central sensitization (e.g., classic fibromyalgia, panic disorder, PTSD, irritable bowel disorders, irritable bladder, etc.)
- Those who need help focusing during stressful events, such as academic tests or athletic pursuits

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Consult with your health-care practitioner about your specific circumstances and any questions you may have about this product.

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# Calming Essentials<sup>TM</sup>

*Natural support for promoting calm and focus\**

## L-Theanine

L-Theanine is an amino acid found mainly in tea (especially green tea) and various fungi. It crosses the blood brain barrier and is known to promote calm and a healthy response to stress. L-theanine is a natural pairing with GABA, as it also lessens over-excitation of neurons in the brain, reduces sympathetic nervous system activity, and promotes mental relaxation without inducing drowsiness. While neither GABA nor L-theanine induce daytime sleepiness, taking them in the evening may help promote restful sleep as a result of calming the mind.

## Additional Roles for GABA and Theanine

Some of the pharmaceutical agents (e.g., gabapentin, pregabalin) frequently used for conditions associated with hypervigilance and/or central sensitization—such as fibromyalgia, panic disorder, PTSD, insomnia, etc.—are GABA agonists and may also increase the concentration and rate of synthesis of endogenous GABA. Providing GABA itself in a bioavailable form may be beneficial for individuals with these conditions. Diminished GABA levels and altered GABAergic signaling may play a role in gastrointestinal disorders associated with high levels of stress and hypervigilance, such as irritable bladder or bowel conditions. GABA receptors are found within the GI tract, and various GABAergic drugs have been investigated for their positive effects on stress-related GI problems.

GABA-centric therapies may hold promise for inflammatory, neuroinflammatory and autoimmune conditions. According to researchers, “Persistent neuroinflammation has been recognised as a major pathological component of virtually all neurodegenerative diseases and has also been a focus of research into the pathology underlying psychiatric disorders.... Accumulating evidence suggests that GABAergic activities are closely bound to immune processes and signals, and thus the GABAergic neurotransmitter system might represent an important therapeutic target in modulating neuroinflammation.”

More research is needed, but mechanistic explanations support a potential therapeutic role for L-theanine in anxiety and panic disorders, obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD), schizophrenia, ADHD and more.<sup>19</sup>

## What are Liposomes?

Liposomes are spheres made of phospholipids—the same primary building blocks of cell membranes. Owing to this structure, liposomes bond easily with cell membranes to deliver their nutrient cargo (in this case, GABA and L-theanine). Liposomes are extremely tiny particles, which allows for fast absorption, starting in the mouth.

Designs for Calming Essentials<sup>TM</sup> employs liposome particles that are 50-100nm in size, in contrast to 200-600nm particles that are more commonly available from other manufacturers. The smaller sized particles result in increased oral and cellular uptake and faster transmucosal absorption in the mouth. In fact, it is recommended to hold the product in the mouth for 30 seconds before swallowing to take advantage of this effective route of absorption. Additionally, clearance of these particles from the bloodstream (via the liver and spleen) is inversely related to size: the smallest particles circulate the longest, increasing the likelihood of absorption at their target tissues. Note that the phospholipids used in this product are derived from sunflower lecithin (soy-free, non-GMO material).

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## Recommended Use

- As a dietary supplement, take 2 mL (approx. 4 pumps), or as directed by your health care practitioner.
- Since the very small size of the liposome particles allows for some absorption to take place right away, it is recommended to hold the product in the mouth for 30 seconds before swallowing.

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