

Does chewing gum give your brain an edge?

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In small study, people who were chewing had better recall of numbers.

(HealthDay)—That wad of gum you're chewing may be more than a breath-freshener—it might also boost your powers of concentration, a small new study suggests.

According to British investigators, prior research has found that the act of [chewing gum](#) could boost concentration when doing sight-related [memory tasks](#). Their new study looked at the effects of chewing gum during a hearing-related [memory test](#).

The experiment included 38 people who were split into two groups, each of which performed a 30-minute task that involved listening to a list of numbers from one to nine read aloud in a random order. The participants were scored on how accurately and quickly they were able to detect a sequence of odd-even-odd numbers, such as seven-two-one. One group chewed gum while doing the task.

Overall, participants who chewed gum had quicker reaction times and more accurate results than those who didn't chew gum. This was especially true toward the end of the task, according to the study, which was published March 8 in the [British Journal of Psychology](#).

"Interestingly, participants who didn't chew gum performed slightly better at the beginning of the task but were overtaken by the end," Kate Morgan, of Cardiff University, said in a journal news release. "This suggests that chewing gum helps us focus on tasks that require continuous monitoring over a longer amount of time."

More information: The Nemours Foundation explains what happens when you [swallow gum](#).

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