



WRIGLEY

# Benefits of Chewing™

## Chewing Gum May Help Enhance Alertness and Attention and Help Reduce Anxiety

### Background

In today's world of multi-tasking, lack of concentration and increased stress are challenges that most people face. According to a Wrigley Usage and Purchase Study,<sup>1</sup> over one quarter of teens (26 percent) and 15 percent of adults agree with the statement that "when I am tense or excited, chewing gum helps calm me." In addition, 28 percent of teens and 15 percent of adults say that "chewing gum is a great way to help me feel more relaxed."

Psychiatrists and psychologists suggest some of the main reasons people chew gum are to relieve boredom and tension. Chewing gum may also help release nervous energy and provide an outlet for frustration and irritation.

We often seek simple and convenient ways to increase focus and relieve life's little stresses. What many don't know is that chewing gum may be an easy solution in certain situations. Research has shown that chewing gum can increase alertness and attention, help relieve daily stresses like commuting or waiting in line and can help improve mood.

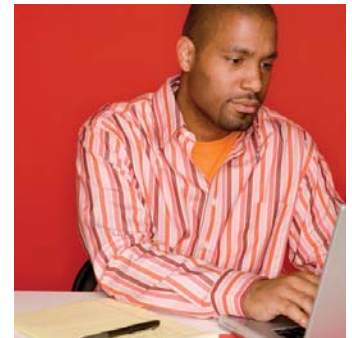
### Chewing Gum Can Help Focus and Concentration

Consumers have used chewing gum to improve alertness, focus and concentration for decades. Because gum has been recognized for its benefits in helping with alertness at the same time it eases tension, the U.S. Armed Forces have supplied chewing gum to their members ever since World War I. It is still included in field and combat rations today. Many athletes and coaches seem to chew gum to "stay in the game" and ease tension and anxiety. And, some teachers have reversed school policies and encouraged students to chew gum during tests to help increase their alertness and concentration.

Research conducted in the area of chewing gum and cognitive performance is complex, but results are emerging on a number of fronts. A 75-person study at the University of Northumbria, in the United Kingdom, showed that chewing gum appeared to improve people's ability to learn, retain and retrieve information. Lucy Wilkinson and her colleagues found that chewing gum while performing memory tests enhanced measures of working and long-term memory. One-third of participants chewed gum during 20 minutes of memory and attention tests, one-third mimicked chewing movements, and the remainder did not chew. The tests included questions relating to short-term memory such as words and pictures and the so-called working memory, for example the ability to remember a telephone number. The results showed that gum chewers' scores were 24 percent higher than the control group on tests involving immediate word recall and 36 percent higher than controls on tests involving delayed word recall.<sup>2</sup>

Other preliminary research conducted in the UK and Germany has reported findings on working memory and immediate and delayed recall with gum chewing. An 83-student study found that chewing gum could aid learning, particularly in a 24-hour recall test.<sup>3</sup> Another 58-person study found a significant positive effect of chewing gum on sustained attention, but not an improvement on participants' memory function.<sup>4</sup>

More research is necessary to uncover the cognitive benefits chewing gum may provide, but preliminary studies do suggest that it may be an effective way to boost focus and concentration.



<sup>1</sup> Wrigley Chewing Gum Usage and Purchase Study. 2003, 2005.

<sup>2</sup> Wilkinson L, Scholey AB, Wesnes K. "Chewing gum selectively improves memory in healthy volunteers." *Appetite*. 2002; 38(3): 235-236.

<sup>3</sup> Baker JR, Benzance JB, Zellaby E, Aggleton JP. "Chewing gum can produce context-dependent effects upon memory." *Appetite*. 2004; 43: 207-210.

<sup>4</sup> Tucha D, Mecklinger L, Maier K, Hammerl M, Lange KW. "Chewing gum differentially affects aspects of attention in health subjects." *Appetite*. 2004; 42: 327-329.

Gum is Good!™

