

Nootropics

Name	Common Positives	Common Negatives	Low Daily Dose [1]	High Daily Dose [2]	Comments - ROA/Interactions	Comments - Mode of Action	Comments - Other	Link/Info
5-HTP	Mood elevator, Sleep enhancer, Replenishes Serotonin	Stomach pain, Serotonin Syndrome	100mg	200mg	nausea can be alleviated with serotonin-antagonist antiemetics; smaller dose spaced out helps alleviate problems.	Serotonin precursor that can cross the blood-brain barrier	Cheap. Beneficial following use of drugs with serotonergic effects. Tolerance/dependency over time	Older paper: http://www.thorne.com/altmedrev/fulltext/3/4/271.pdf
Acetyl-L-Carnitine (ALCAR)	Enhances alertness and mental energy.	Large doses require supplementation with an antioxidant (usually Alpha Lipoic Acid) to counteract pro-oxidant effects. Some reports of depression and sleepiness.	500mg	3000mg	increases aldosterone?	L-Arginine precursor		
Acetyl-L-Tyrosine	More bioavailable than L-Tyrosine	Often comes with folate						
Acorus calamus	Memory enhancing activity							
Adrafinil	Not controlled, precursor to Modafinil. Decreased sleepiness, increased mood, focus and attention	Slow onset of action, consistent use can lead to an increase in liver enzymes (monitoring highly recommended)	200mg	600mg	Must take on empty stomach, effects start after 2 hrs	Metabolized to modafinil	Not controlled in US	
Afamelanotide (Melanotan I)	Sunless tanning, skin cancer prevention, antioxidant	Tanning			Requires subcutaneous injection	Alpha melanocyte stimulating hormone analog	Watch out for counterfeits, Melanotan II is different	
Afobazol(e)	Anxiolytic	Unknown					Shipped from Russia only?	
Alpha GPC	Counteracts Racetam headaches and brainfog. Boosts HGH levels.		300mg		Probably only need one choline source. Better bioavailability		Expensive	
Alpha Lipoic Acid	Reduces oxidative damage caused by ALCAR, recycles vitamin C		100mg	300mg	Able to cross the BBB.			
Amantadine	Reduces fatigue, helps fight influenza (new flu is fairly resistant), antiparkinsonian, prevents L-DOPA caused dyskinesia	May cause arrhythmias (long QT syndrome), anticholinergic, highly toxic in overdose				NMDA blocker, anticholinergic, DA and NE effects		
Amla berries								
Aniracetam	Memory, focus, anti-anxiety	Headaches, Brain-fog			Fat soluble.	Also an Ampakine	Bitter taste, stronger than Piracetam, shorter duration	

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Armodafinil	Alertness and anti-fatigue. Is considered more effective than its racemic predecessor, Modafinil, as it contains only the active R-enantiomer. Also has a longer half-life than Modafinil.	same as Modafinil	25-50mg	150mg	same as Modafinil	Active enantiomer of modafinil	Nowhere near becoming generic (possibly won't be)	
Ashwagandha	Muscle growth, Sleep, Confidence, Alertness		500mg					
Aspirin (acetylsalicylic acid)	Antipyretic, analgesic, improved cardiovascular and ischemic stroke risk, food preservative	Increases clotting time, slightly worsened hemorrhagic stroke risk, large doses can cause gastrointestinal upset and gastric ulcers	25mg (cardioprotective)	1000mg	Counterindicated in children with flu-like symptoms, some people are sensitive	Irreversible COX inhibitor	Contrary to ibuprofen and naproxen, improves cardiovascular risk	
Atomoxetine (Strattera)						NRI (Norepinephrine reuptake inhibitor)		
Avena Sativa								
Bacopa	Long-term benefits to Memory (increase noticed quicker when using daily high doses), Sleep/dream enhancer, anxiolytic. Some have reported immediate and subtle gains to clarity of thought.	Residual drowsiness	100mg	700mg	Some find it preferable to take at night due to drowsiness.	Active chemicals are Bacosides. Extracts of 45% (Bacognize) and 50% available commercially	Effects and quality may vary from brand to brand. Higher percentage of bacosides don't necessarily indicate a better product; other active molecules have been identified.	
Benfotiamine						Thiamine (B1) derivative		
Boron	Promotes alertness, enhances response time, improvement in short-term memory		< 3 mg.	> 3 mg.				
Bromocriptine		Cognitive impairment. Nausea						
Caffeine	Focus, attention and stimulation, possible euphoria (at high doses)	Jitteriness, anxiety, tolerance, withdrawal headaches, heartrate increase, increased BP	50mg (cup of tea)	300mg however doses up to 1.5g aren't uncommon			Complete tolerance after 2 days to 2 weeks depending on dosage and frequency. Headaches/fatigue upon cessation.	
Carnosine	Anti-oxidant, neuroprotective.		100mg	600mg				
CDP Choline	Counteracts Racetam headaches and brainfog				Probably only need one choline source. Not quite as good bioavailability, but faster acting than AlphaGPC			

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Celastrus paniculatus	Improvement in learning and memory attributed to its antioxidant effects							
Centrophenoxine	Counteracts Racetam headaches and brainfog. Also improves mood				Probably only need one choline source			
Cerebrolysin		Accumulation of LDL carrier protein can lead to plaque buildup in arteries						
Cholesterol	Necessary for cell membranes, major component of bile, HDL can reduce atherosclerotic plaque					Stabilizes cell membranes, source of most sex hormones,	LDL/HDL ratio is the best risk predictor for long term cardiovascular health	
Choline Bitartate	Counteracts Racetam headaches and brainfog				Probably only need one choline source. Low bioavailability.		Cheap.	
Choline Citrate	Counteracts Racetam headaches and brainfog		500mg	3000mg	Water soluble, probably only need one choline source. Low bioavailability.		Cheap. Tastes SOUR	
Citrulline	Vasodilator, Arousal, Sleep enhancer?	Arousal		10g	(Best absorbed on an empty stomach)			
D,L-Amphetamine (Adderall)	Focus, attention	Loss of creativity, inability to rapidly switch track between concepts, sometimes slow memory retrieval, elevated blood pressure, tolerance, tunnel vision, motor tics, hypomania, insomnia - in rare cases may cause excitotoxicity long-term, stimulant-induced psychosis	5mg	60mg	IR lasts 4-5 hrs; XR equivalent to two doses 4 hrs apart. Arousal effects last longer than cognitive effects	inhibits re-uptake of NE/DA, and requires stimuli to release DA/NE into synaptic cleft.	controlled drug unless prescribed. Not easily available online	
Desmopressin (Vasopressin)	Enhances recall	Hypotension, increased urination						
Dimethylamylamine/ Methylhexanamine	Thermogenic, fast acting	Easy to exceed effective dose	25mg	60mg (per dose)			short acting, similar feel to (and popular substitute of) ephedrine, but can be taken late in the day. Vasoconstrictor,	
DLPA (D,L Phenylalanine)		hyperactivity/jitteryness in some users. DPA (D-Phenylalanine) is supposed to be better for those users.				Converts into PEA more than L- Phenylalanine alone; more sustained but subtler effect than PEA alone		

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DMAE	Reduce and/or prevent DNA damage. Enhance brain activity. Enhance ability to fight stressors. Improve learning, memory, creativity, and verbal fluency. Reduce and/or remove lipofuscin - age spots.	There are no known negative drug or nutrient interactions. It is thought that DMAE can make epilepsy and bipolar depression worse	100mg			the benefits of therapy are seen only after long term use. Studies lasting only four weeks showed no improvement..		
Donepezil (Aricept)						Reversible ACh-ase inhibitor	Generally a choline source is preferred to an AChEI for people under 50. Too much acetylcholine can cause major depression.	
Eggs	Cheap, lots of protein in whites and choline in yolk	Risk of salmonella (low) and slimy if eaten raw. Yolk is high in cholesterol. Common allergy and intolerance to egg whites.			Drink from a glass, poach, boil, whatever really. Raw are less effective. Overdose of raw egg whites can cause skin and hair damage due to avidin interaction with biotin.		Everyone loves Eggs!! (except vegans and people not liking chicken batteries)	
Entacapone	Increases L-DOPA delivery to brain when used with Carbidopa					Inhibits peripheral COMT	Does nothing by itself, and very little without L-DOPA and Carbidopa	
Ephedrine	Good bronchodilator, burns fat, vasoconstrictor (good for common cold)	Difficult to sleep if taken late in day, hurts sleep quality.		90mg	Caution with MAO inhibitors		Controlled in most countries (still available in US in combination with expectorants). See http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ephedrine#Legal_status	Available in US OTC as Bronchaid and Primatene (and store brands)
Fisetin	Enhances long-term memory.							
Fursultiamine								
GABA	Purported relaxation	Poorly traverses BBB. Some users report brain fog.		5000mg	Picamilon is a derivative designed to cross BBB better. There are other derivatives?		Also consider valerian for similar effects	
Gabapentin	anxiolytic, possible euphoria							
GABOB		Diarrhea						
Galantamine	vivid dreams	Increases REM sleep		16mg		Reversible ACh-ase inhibitor	Available w/o Rx in US	
GHB	Euphoria, relaxation, anxiolytic, boosts HGH levels, latent dopamine release (anti-hangover!)	Strong sedative - unconsciousness and breathing difficulties in high doses					Scheduled in many jurisdictions. Can be substituted with GBL.	

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Gilatide	Activates various memory genes							
Ginkgo Biloba	Enhances cerebral blood flow, vasodilator	Takes a long time to show effects. Some users report swollen testicles.	40mg	240mg				
Ginseng	Increased Energy	There are some reports of nosebleeds and vaginal bleeding.						
Glycine	Neuroplasticity, Sleep enhancer					Required for activation of NMDA receptors by glutamate		
Gotu Kola	Energy Level boost							
Green and white tea	Enhances angiogenesis and retention of spatial information. Contains L-Theanine an anti-anxiolytic. Antioxidant. Anticancer in large doses (ECGC).	Obstipation, see caffeine for high doses	1 double brewed cup	5 double brewed cups		Polyphenols, ECGC, caffeine. ECGC may be weak MAO-B inhibitor	Caffeine-free formulations available for bedtime use or if stacking	
Huperzine A	Memory, Vivid dreams	Headaches	50mcg	1000mcg		Acetylcholinesterase inhibition and NMDA receptor antagonism		
Hydergine	Enhances cognition, promotes dendrite growth & is neuroprotective - considered a good "all-rounder" nootropic.	Sustained use could lead to fibrosis.	4.5mg		tolerance develops fast			
Idobenone	Prevents lipid peroxidation (cell membrane degeneration), reported cognitive benefits	Relatively expensive (but usually cheaper than CoQ10)	30mg	200mg	Percent bioavailability decreases with larger dose. Fat soluble.	Bioavailable form of CoQ10		
Kratom	feels great!	rapid tolerance and addiction potential					At lower dosages, acts like a stimulant. At higher dosages, acts as a sedating agent, which feels similar to many opiates.	
L-Arginine	Vasodilator, Arousal, Sleep enhancer	Arousal	500mg	3000mg				
L-Lysine	Stress reduction, mood elevator.		500mg	3000mg				
L-methylfolate	Memory, recall					Precursor to THB/BH4		
L-Theanine	Anti-anxiety. Increases dopamine. Promotes relaxation		100mg					

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L-Thyroxine (T4)	Increases arousal, metabolism, deficiency causes depression	Overdose: Increased BP and heart rate, sweating, stress-like symptoms	25ug	200ug		Thyroid hormone	Vitamin D deficiency can cause thyroid deficiency	
L-Tryptophan	Mood elevator, Sleep enhancer	Stomach pain			Interacts with MAOI	5-HTP precursor	Cheap, known cases of bacterial contamination	
L-Tyrosine	Alertness, replenishes NTs. Increases dopamine	Downregulation of dopamine receptors. Sleepy, brain fog.	500mg	4g	Competes with tryptophan for crossing BBB	Precursor to dopamine, norepinephrine, epinephrine, thyroid hormones		
Levetiracetam								
Levodopa+Carbidopa	Well-being, focus	Dyskinesia	depends on a lot			Carbidopa inhibits peripheral AADC	Antiparkinsonian drug	
Lion's Mane	NGF promotion	Expensive, can induce fatigue in some users.	500mg				Not from a lion, not an herb, actually a mushroom. Takes months of daily use for effects to be noticeable	
Lithium	Neuroprotection, mood stabilization	Sedation, apathy, Can affect Kidney Function						
Maca	Dopamine Level enhancement							
Magnesium Aspartate	Magnesium is a strong muscle relaxant and thus is also helpful to counteract jawclenching or muscle tension from other supplements.					Commonly found in ZMA		
Magnesium Glycinate	High bioavailability. Magnesium is a strong muscle relaxant and thus is also helpful to counteract jawclenching or muscle tension from other supplements. Also contains glycine, which can help neuroplasticity	Larger pills than other Mg formulations		400mg	Magnesium competes with calcium for absorption; do not take together with calcium sources	Blocks NMDAR at specific binding site		
Mega BC5	Counteracts Racetam headaches and brainfog				Probably only need one choline source			
Melanotan II, Bremelanotide	Sunless tanning, skin cancer prevention, antioxidant, counters erectile dysfunction, increases sexual arousal	Tanning, spontaneous erections			Intranasal administration causes increased BP	Alpha melanocyte stimulating hormone analog	Watch out for counterfeits	

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Melatonin	Promotes sleep (helps reset circadian rhythm), antioxidant, promotes immune function	Changes in sex hormone levels and prolactin in large doses, headaches, depression, delayed gut transit	.3 mg	60mg	Counterindicated in autoimmune conditions		Take at night after turning off the light for maximum effect	
MEM 1414	Memory enhancement by acting on a gene called CREB					Phosphodiesterase blocker		
Memantine	May improve memory (proven in moderate-to-advanced alzheimer's) Slows amphetamine tolerance	Possible drowsiness and temporary worsening of short-term memory	10mg	30mg	Can be used safely with ACh-ase inhibitors	NMDA blocker (displaced by appropriate stimulus)	Short-term memory deficits are rectified by upregulation in nAChR7 receptors.	
Methylcobalamin (methyl-B12)	Short-term memory improvement	physical anxiety (symptom your body is saturated?)	1mg	10mg	Sublingual	Injections also available via Rx	It's identical to normal vitamin B12 in mode of action, only slightly better retained	
Modafinil	Large increase in focus, alertness, motivation and agility.	Irritability, tunnel vision, panic, adverse skin reactions (rare), talking to yourself, circular thoughts, emotional dulling.	25-100mg	400mg	Strong wakefulness promotor - sleep difficult within 8 - 12 hours		Prescription only in most countries (Ok to import into UK). Can cause short term paralysis (50mg personal experience), so take in a low dose if first time to find out if you are hypersensitive/allergic	http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Modafinil
Mucuna Puriens (Velvet bean)	Growth hormone release, Libido, Relaxation and focus (for some)	Peripheral dopamine side effects	50mg L-DOPA content	400mg L-DOPA content (very high end)		Source of L-DOPA	60% extracts available.	
NAC (N-Acetyl-Cysteine)	Brain repair, addiction reduction, prevents liver damage from alcohol and paracetamol, antioxidant (recycles glutathione), mucolytic, protects hearing, helps fight influenza, chelates heavy metals	Vasoconstrictor/Heart issues?, too much mucolysis, in very high doses - nausea	500mg	2000mg		More stable analog of cysteine	Fairly low bioavailability, sour smell and taste	
Nicergoline	A milder Hydergine		10mg			Alpha-1 adrenergic antagonist		
Nicotine	Stimulation, anxiolytic	Addiction (Only if taken with MAO Inhibitor), tolerance, vasoconstrictor Acute: lightheadedness, vertigo	1 mg (one cigarette or half a piece of regular-strength gum: see links)	Chainsmoking	Smoking=bad in a lot of ways. Transdermal, buccal (gum), and electronic cigarettes (e-cigs safety still not properly evaluated, may be even more dangerous) safest ROA.		New research shows that nicotine is *not* addictive unless administered with an MAOI. (MAOIs are found in tobacco)	http://www.ftc.gov/foia/frequentreque

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Noopept	Supposedly 1000x more potent than piracetam		10mg?	50mg?	Multiple small doses needed			
Omega 3 Fatty Acids (EPA, DHA) (Fish Oil, Flaxseed Oil)	Promotes muscle growth and general health, neuroprotective, anti-inflammatory						Good sources are canola and olive oil, certain fatty fish (e.g. cod family)	
Omega 6 Fatty Acids (GLA) (Borage Oil, Evening Primrose Oil)		Pro-inflammatory						
Oxiracetam	Memory, Recall		300mg	1200mg	Water soluble.		Almost tasteless. More Expensive.	
PEA (Phenylethylamine)	Focus, attention and stimulation, euphoria	10-minute half-life without MAO-B inhibitor	250 mg	2.5 gr	Often combined with selegiline (MAO-B inhibitor)		best when 500 mg PEA taken on empty stomach along with 1 cap of Rhodiola extract (GAIA herbs)	
Phenibut	Relaxation without sedation	Addictive - severe withdrawal syndrome for about a week, insomnia, panic attacks, unrelieved by benzos	500mg	3000mg		GABA derivative - GABA-B agonist	Cheap	
Phentermine	Weight-loss drug	(Don't know if it belongs on this list; there are lots of other amphetamine-like compounds)					short acting, similar feel to (and popular substitute of) ephedrine, but can be taken late in the day. Vasoconstrictor,	
Phenylpiracetam (Phenotropil)	Improves tolerance to cold weather and increases productivity						Available only in/from Russia. Expensive.	
Phosphatidyl Choline (PC)								
Phosphatidyl Serine (PS)	Lower cortisol levels, reduced stress, improved mood	Expensive, from soy			Fat soluble (usually comes in oil base)		Seems ineffective to supplement	
Picamilon	Improves cerebral blood flow and relieves stress/anxiety, facilitates the transport of GABA through the BBB				GABA source that crosses BBB	Also provides niacin		
Piracetam	Clarity, Memory, Verbal Fluidity, anti-vertigo	Headaches, Brain-fog, Hyperactivity, paradoxical sleepiness	1000mg	6000mg	Water soluble. Leads to hyperactivity when taken with caffeine.		Can cause vivid dreams. May also prevent sleep. Tastes bitter.	
Piribedil	Increased attention and focus		50mg			D2, D3 agonist		
Pramiracetam	Memory, focus, verbal fluidity, stimulating goal-oriented behaviour	Expensive; Stomach pain	100mg	1200mg	Fat soluble.		Foul taste, stronger than Piracetam	

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Pregnenolone			5-10mg	100mg	May cause hair loss and skin problems.			
Pseudoephedrine	Good decongestant, increased BMR (weight loss), Focus improvement (for those with ADHD), Increased energy levels	High blood pressure, Sweating, cannot buy in bulk (precursor to methamphetamine and regulated)	30mg				Controlled in most countries (Available OTC in US). Tolerance builds over about 2 weeks. Cycle 1 week on 1 week off to avoid adrenal fatigue	
Purslane	Neuroprotective?							
Pyritinol	faster reaction time, studies suggest great hangover tool (higher doses)	possible diarrhea			Does not mesh well with methylphenidate (Ritalin)			
R-Lipoic Acid	Reduces oxidative damage caused by ALCAR, recycles vitamin C		150mg	1200mg		Active enantiomer of ALA		
Rasagiline (Azilect/Agilect)	No methamphetamine metabolites	Expensive (until 2012 when it becomes generic)				Excellent MAO-B specificity		
Rhodiola Rosea	Mental Energy, Mood, Relaxation		500mg				Quick tolerance. Purchase standardized.	
Rivastigmine	Memory					Acetylcholinesterase and butyrylcholinesterase inhibitor		
Rolipram								
Ropinirole						agonist at D3 (strong) D2, D4 (weaker)		
Saint John's Wort	mild relaxation, slight sedation	cataractogenesis, interacts with drugs					Strongly interacts with CYP3D4	
SAM-e (S-adenosyl methionine)	Mood elevation, anti-depressant	Expensive	200mg	1600mg	Use only enteric coated, take on empty stomach			
Selegiline (L-Deprenyl)	Boosts PEA action, probably neuroprotective	Has methamphetamine metabolite; might cause drug test failure	For neuroprotection: 1 mg 3x/week	For full MAO inhibition: 10mg/day	Liquid, tablet, transdermal available	MAO-B specific (loses specificity in high doses)		
Semax						Mode of action unknown	Russian nootropic	
Sibutramine	Appetite suppresant	Hypertensive crysis, suicidal ideation				Withdrawn from US, UK market (Meridia, Reductil)	Do not confuse with Sulbutiamine	
Soy Lecithin	Counteracts Racetam headaches and brainfog. Suitable for Vegetarians	Low bioavilability, common allergy and intolerance to soy			Probably only need one choline source. Weak source.		Very cheap. Suitable for vegetarians.	
Statins (simvastatin, lovastatin, atorvastatin)	Improved cardiovascular risk, reduces LDL cholesterol, slightly increases HDL cholesterol	Muscle pain, rarely rhabdomyolysis (muscle death)	10mg	80mg	Counterindicated in pregnancy (fetotoxic), metabolized by CYP3A4	HMG-CoA reductase inhibitor	Lovastatin is a component of oyster mushrooms and red yeast rice	

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Sulbutiamine	Focus, stimulation, high/relentless energy	Loss of creativity	100mg	400mg	Fat soluble - take with food		Tastes awful	
Sulpiride						D2, D3 antagonist	Presynaptic antagonism leads to increased dopamine response in some areas	
Synephrine		Linked to heart failure					Found in weight loss supps but available alone	
Tianeptine (Stablon)	Anxiolytic, anti-depressant	Takes 1-2 weeks to notice effects, not sold in US or UK	12.5mg x 3		Short half-life; must take multiple times per day. Do not use with SSRIs.	Demonstrated serotonin reuptake enhancer, but effects likely due to noradrenergic and dopaminergic actions as well	Not approved in US or UK (this actually makes it less of a legal problem to import); few foreign sources on Internet	
TMG (Trimethylglycine)	Mood elevation							
Tramadol		Contains an antidepressant with similar structure to Effexor, a significant % of users develop high tolerance & extremely disabling withdrawal syndrome.	50mg	400mg	SNRI usually taken every 4 to 6 hours or as needed			
Tribulus								
Turmeric (Curcumin)	Antioxidant, antiviral (HSV-1), anticancer, nootropic	Possible gastrointestinal upset, stains everything yellow, chelates iron	Effects shown on traditional Hindu oil preparation at "few times a month" level		Inhibits CYP3A4 and CYP2D6, very low bioavailability unless taken with piperine (black pepper) and oil-solubilized	Induces glutathione S-transferase, increases BDNF concentration in hippocampus, inhibits mTOR	Might act pro-oxidant in very specific conditions, major constituent of curry	
Uridine	Increases neuronal levels of CDP-choline, enhances growth or neurites, improves memory and spatial learning abilities, may promote improved mood							
Valerian	relaxation	brain fog similar to Benzodiazepines and GABA						
Vinpocetine	Anti-oxidant, helps all round brain improvement	NMDA/AMPA receptor antagonist	10mg	40mg	Effective vasodilator that is cheap and should be in everyone's stack. Do not mix with methylphenidate, which is a vasoconstrictor.			

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Vitamin C	Antioxidant, necessary vitamin - prevents scurvy, recycles cysteine (e.g. NAC)	Massive doses can cause vomiting, diarrhea, somewhat diuretic	100mg (110% RDA)	3000mg			Cheap - Comes in delicious flavours! (especially in unprocessed fruits, vegetables and meat)	
Xanthinol Nicotinate								
Yerba Mate		slight appetite suppression						
Zinc	Zinc is a neurotransmitter, helps prevent copper excess, helps burn fat	NMDA antagonist, overdose might cause copper deficiency	10 mg (RDA)	150mg	Zinc Picolinate is most bioavailable form		Few people have zinc deficiency	

1. Low end of average rather than low end of possible
2. High end of average rather than high end of possible. Not attack doses