

Tualang Honey & Human Memory Research

A simple research summary from Bee-Licious Honey



A Tualang Tree Hosting Multiple *Apis dorsata* Colonies

*A mature Tualang tree (Koompassia excelsa) can support numerous colonies of giant honeybees, *Apis dorsata*. Each colony builds a single exposed comb beneath a large branch, creating one of the rainforest's most extraordinary natural sights.*

Photo by T. R. Shankar Raman (Sabah, Borneo). Cropped from the original.
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Why Tualang Honey Has Attracted Scientific Interest

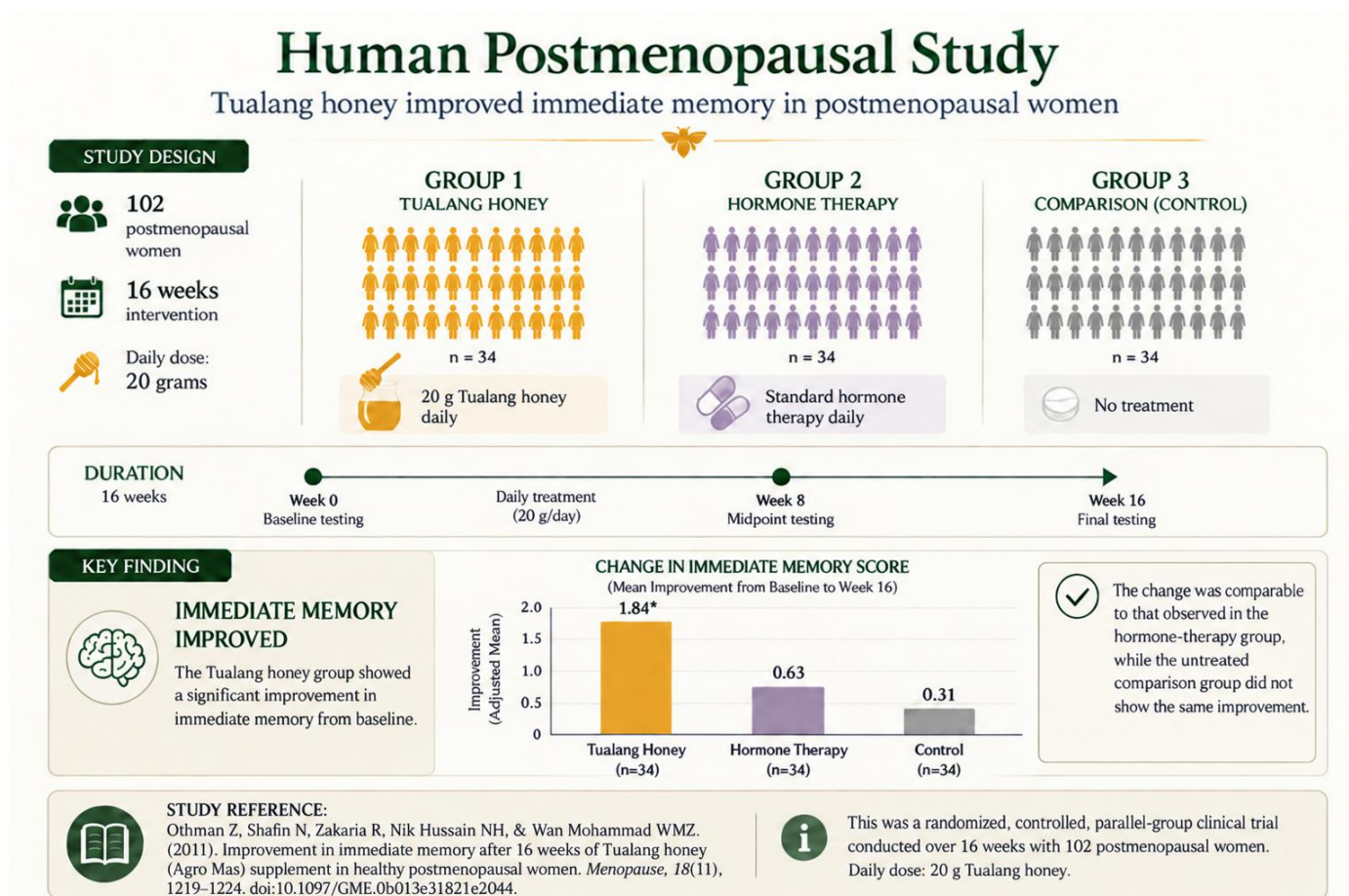
Tualang honey is a wild rainforest honey produced by the giant honey bee, *Apis dorsata*, and collected from large nests built high in Tualang trees. Today, more than two decades of published research have examined Tualang honey in laboratory, animal, and human studies, making it one of the most extensively studied tropical honeys. Researchers have investigated its chemical composition, antioxidant activity, brain and memory effects, bone health, wound healing, antibacterial activity, inflammation and many other areas.

Much of the research on Tualang honey began in laboratories and animal models. One of the most important milestones came when researchers moved beyond those early experiments and conducted a randomized human clinical trial examining memory in healthy postmenopausal women.

Human Study at a Glance

102 healthy postmenopausal women | 16 weeks | 20 g Tualang honey daily

Three groups: Tualang honey, estrogen-plus-progestin therapy, and an untreated comparison group.



Why Study Postmenopausal Women?

During and after menopause, declining estrogen levels can be associated with changes in memory and cognitive function. Researchers chose this population because it offered a meaningful way to test whether observations from earlier Tualang honey research might also be reflected in human memory performance.

Study Design

- 102 healthy postmenopausal women were recruited and randomly assigned to three groups.
- The Tualang honey group consumed 20 grams daily for 16 weeks.
- A second group received estrogen-plus-progestin therapy.
- A third group received no treatment and served as the comparison group.
- Researchers evaluated verbal learning and memory before and after the intervention.

Key Finding

Women who consumed Tualang honey demonstrated significant improvement in immediate memory after 16 weeks. The published paper reported that this improvement was comparable with the improvement seen in the estrogen-plus-progestin therapy group. The study did not report the same improvement for delayed recall.

Why This Study Matters

This study was important because it moved Tualang honey research from laboratory chemistry and animal models into human participants. It does not prove that Tualang honey prevents or treats dementia or other neurological disease, and it does not replace established medical care. It does, however, provide a human clinical finding that helped justify continued scientific investigation.

How Did Researchers Get to a Human Study?

Before researchers tested Tualang honey in people, scientists had already examined it in laboratory and animal studies. Some brain and memory studies used standard neuroscience tools to measure learning, memory, oxidative stress, and changes in the hippocampus.

What Is the Morris Water Maze?

The Morris Water Maze is a widely used animal research test of spatial learning and memory. A rodent is placed in a pool containing a hidden platform. With repeated trials, researchers measure whether the animal learns the platform's location and reaches it more quickly. It is an animal research tool, not part of the human postmenopausal study.



Additional Human Research

The postmenopausal memory trial was not the end of the human research. In 2014, researchers published a related study in postmenopausal women examining blood oxidative-stress markers after 16 weeks of Tualang honey supplementation. Other clinical work has also explored Tualang honey in cognitive research. A 2024 systematic review summarized more than two decades of published Tualang honey research across human, animal, and laboratory studies.

Read the Original Human Memory Study

Othman Z, Shafin N, Zakaria R, Nik Hussain NH, Wan Mohammad WMZ. Improvement in immediate memory after 16 weeks of Tualang honey (Agro Mas) supplement in healthy postmenopausal women. *Menopause*. 2011;18(11):1219-1224. doi:10.1097/GME.0b013e31821e2044.

[Direct study link](#)

Continue Exploring the Science

- [Tualang Honey Supplementation Reduces Blood Oxidative Stress Levels/Activities in Postmenopausal Women \(2014\).](#)
- [Tualang Honey: A Decade of Neurological Research \(2021 review\).](#)
- [Medicinal Activities of Tualang Honey: A Systematic Review \(2024\).](#)

A Note About the Evidence

Tualang honey has a substantial and growing research literature, but the strength of evidence differs by topic. Some findings come from human trials, while many others come from animal or laboratory studies. Results from laboratory and animal research cannot automatically be assumed to occur in people.

Looking Ahead

The 2011 human memory study was an important milestone, but it represents only one part of a growing body of research. Scientists continue to study Tualang honey to better understand its unique properties and potential applications.

About the Author

Jennifer Lytle is the co-founder of Bee-Licious Honey and a beekeeper who is passionate about helping people better understand honey through education. She reviews published scientific research on Tualang honey and translates complex findings into clear, easy-to-understand educational resources for consumers. Jennifer is also the author of the upcoming book, *The Story Behind Tualang Honey*.

About Bee-Licious Honey

Bee-Licious Honey is an Oregon-based family business founded by beekeepers **Jeff Garner and Jennifer Lytle**. We specialize in authentic specialty honeys from around the world and believe every honey has a story. Through educational articles, Honey House tastings, presentations, and carefully sourced products, our mission is to help people discover the unique origins, flavors, and science behind exceptional honey.

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