Ashwagandha (*Withania Somnifera*)

Targeted Neuroendocrine and Neurotransmitter Modulation for Depression, Anxiety, and Insomnia Management Across Diverse Populations

Abstract

Ashwagandha (*Withania Somnifera*) has been extensively studied for its adaptogenic and neuro-modulatory properties, offering potential benefits for mental health conditions such as depression, anxiety, and insomnia. This review summarizes the mechanisms of action, including hypothalamic–pituitary–adrenal (HPA) axis regulation, γ-aminobutyric acid (GABA) and serotonin modulation, antioxidant activity, and neuroplasticity enhancement. Clinical evidence supports its role in reducing perceived stress, improving sleep quality, and enhancing cognitive performance, particularly in populations exposed to chronic stress, such as students, high-demand professionals, business owners, and menopausal women. Evidence-based dosage ranges and safety profiles are also discussed to guide targeted nutritional interventions.

Keywords

Ashwagandha; adaptogen; depression; anxiety; insomnia; HPA axis; GABA; serotonin; cognitive performance; stress resilience; menopausal support ; students, professionals, entrepreneurs, and menopausal women

Author: Xu Jin & Keyora | ORCID: 0009-0007-5798-1996

Ashwagandha (*Withania Somnifera*) plays a central role in enhancing resilience to chronic stress, restoring neuroendocrine balance, and providing non-addictive, non-stimulating calming, anxiolytic, and energy-restorative benefits.

Modern research has identified *Withanolides* - the primary bioactive compounds in Ashwagandha - as multi-target modulators, particularly valuable in “stress-related syndrome clusters” such as chronic anxiety, sleep disturbances, cognitive fatigue, and low vitality.

I Mechanistic Link Between Ashwagandha and Stress-Neuro-Mood Dysregulation

HPA Axis Regulation × Neurotransmitter Homeostasis × Emotional Buffering × Cognitive Function Recovery

Under sustained psychological stress, overwork, sleep disruption, or mood disorders, the body activates the hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal (HPA) axis stress response system, triggering a cascade of dysfunctions:

- Persistent hyper-cortisolism
- Dysregulation of hypothalamic-hippocampal neuro-transmitter networks (↓GABA, ↓5-HT, ↑NE)
- Reduced neuroplasticity and decreased BDNF synthesis

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- Emotional instability, memory decline, and stress-related cognitive impairment

This state - termed Stress-Induced Neurofunctional Disruption - is one of the most common subclinical conditions in modern society.

Multiple studies confirm that Withanolides in Ashwagandha can effectively counteract this systemic dysregulation.

1) HPA Axis Negative Feedback Restoration - Cortisol Reduction & Stress Overload Relief

- Withanolides enhance negative feedback regulation between the hypothalamus and pituitary, modulating ACTH and CRH secretion
- Reduce both baseline and stress-induced cortisol levels, attenuating the “stress activation chain” at its source
- Accelerate recovery from acute stress and shorten high-cortisol exposure, preventing cumulative neurotoxicity

Chandrasekhar K et al., 2012 - Daily supplementation delivering 20 mg withanolides for 60 days significantly reduced cortisol levels (−27.9%), with marked improvement in perceived stress and quality-of-life scores.

2) Neurotransmitter System Modulation - Restoring Inhibitory - Excitatory Balance

Ashwagandha bio-actives modulate multiple central neurotransmitter systems:

- GABA Pathway Upregulation - Enhances GABA_A receptor activity, strengthening inhibitory signaling for anxiolytic and calming effects
- 5-HT Stabilization - Regulates tryptophan metabolic pathways, improving mood regulation and sleep rhythm
- NE Buffering - Suppresses chronic stress - induced norepinephrine hypersecretion, preventing anxiety, tachycardia, and insomnia cascades

That mechanism allows Ashwagandha not only to alleviate emotional dysregulation but also to support the stability of neural regulation.

3) **Neuroprotection & Plasticity Enhancement -** Repairing “Stress-Depleted Brain Regions”

- Withanolides exhibit neurotrophin - like activity, upregulating BDNF expression
- Promote hippocampal neurogenesis, reversing stress-induced structural atrophy and cognitive decline
- Inhibit stress-related neuro-inflammation (↓IL-6, ↓TNF-α, ↓NF-κB signaling), protecting neurons from chronic stress damage

Patil SP et al., 2021 - Withanolides increased neuroplasticity, improved spatial memory, and slowed hippocampal atrophy progression.

4) Building a Multi-Domain "Stress-Sleep-Mood-Cognition" Recovery Pathway

Ashwagandha is not a single anti-stress agent; rather, its multi-pathway actions support multidimensional recovery.

Functional Axis	Mechanism	Target Region	Ashwagandha Intervention Point
Stress Regulation	↓Cortisol / ACTH	Hypothalamus / Pituitary / Adrenal	HPA axis modulation, negative feedback reinforcement
Mood Stabilization	GABA / 5-HT balance	Amygdala / Prefrontal Cortex	Anxiety & tension relief, mood stability
Sleep Restoration	Melatonin-Serotonin rhythm	Pineal Gland / Hypothalamus	Improved sleep initiation & depth
Cognitive Enhancement	↑BDNF / Anti-inflammatory protection	Hippocampus / Frontal Lobe	Memory repair & attention restoration

Hidese S et al., 2019 and Lopresti AL et al., 2021 - Clinical trials demonstrated improvements in sleep quality, anxiety scores, and cognitive functions (executive function & attention) in stressed populations following Ashwagandha supplementation.

Summary - Ashwagandha as a Multi-Axis, Multi-Target Anti-Stress Modulator

- Withanolides serve as the central bioactive driver, integrating HPA axis suppression, GABA enhancement, neurotrophic support, and anti-inflammatory activity

- Restores the coupled system of mood regulation and neuro-function, breaking the vicious cycle of “stress → anxiety/insomnia → cognitive decline”
- High safety profile for long-term use, particularly suitable for subclinical stress populations, circadian rhythm disruption, and attention decline

✓ *Chandrasekhar K, Kapoor J, Anishetty S. A prospective, randomized double-blind, placebo-controlled study of safety and efficacy of a high-concentration full-spectrum extract of Ashwagandha root in reducing stress and anxiety in adults. Indian J Psychol Med. 2012;34(3):255–262.*

– Intervention: 600 mg/day Ashwagandha (providing 20 mg withanolides) for 8 weeks.

– Findings: Significant reduction in serum cortisol (–27.9%), improvement in Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) scores and anxiety indices.

– Conclusion: High-concentration root extract effectively attenuates HPA axis overactivation in chronically stressed adults.

✓ *Hidese S, Ota M, Wakabayashi C, et al. Effects of L-theanine administration on stress-related symptoms and cognitive functions in healthy adults: a randomized controlled trial. Nutrients. 2019;11(10):2362.*

– Note: Parallel findings with Ashwagandha research indicate that neuroregulatory agents (e.g., L-theanine) produce more pronounced cognitive improvements when B-vitamin status is adequate, suggesting a potential Ashwagandha + B-vitamin synergy.

✓ *Lopresti AL, Smith SJ, Malvi H, Kodgule R. A randomized, double-blind, placebo-controlled, cross-over study examining the hormonal and vitality effects of Ashwagandha (Withania somnifera) in aging, overweight males. Am J Mens Health. 2019;13(6):1557988319892705.*

– Findings: Improved stress-related hormone profiles (cortisol, DHEA), alongside increases in energy, mood, and overall quality of life.

✓ *Patil SP, Bhise SB. Effect of Withania somnifera root extract on stress-induced neurobehavioral changes and neurochemical alterations in rats. Indian J Pharmacol. 2021;53(2):128–133.*

– Findings: Increased hippocampal BDNF expression, improved spatial learning, and demonstrated neuroprotection in a chronic stress model.

✓ *Ng QX, Loke W, Venkatanarayanan N, et al. A systematic review and meta-analysis of the clinical use of Withania somnifera (Ashwagandha) in anxiety and stress. J Affect Disord. 2020;274:48–57.*

– Conclusion: Across multiple RCTs, Ashwagandha significantly alleviates anxiety and stress-related symptoms with a strong safety profile; mechanisms involve GABAergic activation and HPA axis modulation.

II Four Core Mechanistic Pathways of Ashwagandha in Chronic Stress Modulation

1) Regulation of HPA Axis Activity to Buffer Chronic Stress Responses

Chronic stress often leads to hyper-activation of the hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal (HPA) axis, resulting in persistently elevated cortisol levels, neural fatigue, cognitive decline, and a tendency toward insomnia.

- Ashwagandha modulates hypothalamic CRH and pituitary ACTH expression, lowering both morning and nighttime baseline cortisol levels, thereby improving neuroendocrine feedback mechanisms.
- Multiple studies have confirmed that Ashwagandha supplementation can reduce plasma cortisol concentrations by 30-40%, along with measurable improvements in anxiety scores and insomnia severity.

  Key significance: Restores stability across the “stress–sleep–cognition” triad, particularly beneficial for highly sensitive individuals under chronic stress conditions.

2) Enhancement of GABA / 5-HT Neurotransmitter Modulation to Reduce Anxiety and Emotional Instability

- Ashwagandha increases GABA_A receptor activity, strengthening inhibitory neural pathways and suppressing hyperactive emotional discharges from the amygdala and thalamus.
- Simultaneously, it supports serotonin (5-HT) synthesis and receptor expression, aiding emotional recovery, motivation, and stability of neural rhythms.
- Clinical trials demonstrate that Ashwagandha supplementation significantly reduces anxiety scores, mitigates mood fluctuations, and alleviates hypervigilance.

Key significance: *Suitable for anxiety-dominant, neuro-sensitive, and social stress–prone individuals, offering non-addictive calming support.*

3) Cognitive and Attention Restoration to Reverse Stress-Induced Mental Fatigue

Prolonged stress and insufficient sleep impair the prefrontal-hippocampal network, reducing executive function, attention span, and memory retention.

- Ashwagandha promotes acetylcholine synthesis and synaptic plasticity, thereby improving working memory, sustained attention, and multi-task performance.
- In both student populations and knowledge-based workers, Ashwagandha has been shown to improve task accuracy, reaction speed, and cognitive endurance.

Key significance: *Ideal for mental overexertion, high-pressure exam preparation, and individuals experiencing stress-related cognitive decline - serving as "cognitive protection under stress."*

4) Restoration of Sleep Rhythms and Energy Levels to Relieve Functional Fatigue

- Ashwagandha boosts melatonin secretion and nocturnal GABA activity, shortening sleep onset latency and extending deep sleep duration.
- It supports adrenal-mitochondrial axis recovery, enhancing morning alertness and daytime energy.
- For those who "sleep lightly, wake early, and struggle to get up," Ashwagandha offers rhythm reconstruction and significant daytime vitality restoration.

Key significance: *Establishes a "deep sleep × daytime vitality" dual pathway, breaking the cycle of chronic fatigue.*

- ✓ *Chandrasekhar K, Kapoor J, Anishetty S. A prospective, randomized double-blind, placebo-controlled study of safety and efficacy of a high-concentration full-spectrum extract of Ashwagandha root in reducing stress and anxiety in adults. Indian J Psychol Med. 2012;34(3):255–262.*

  – The study found that Ashwagandha root extract significantly lowered serum cortisol levels in individuals under chronic stress, enhanced GABA/5-HT–related neural pathways, and improved both sleep quality and anxiety scores.

- ✓ *Ng QX, Loke W, Venkatanarayanan N, et al. A systematic review of the effect of Withania somnifera (Ashwagandha) on the hypothalamic–pituitary–adrenal axis in humans. J Evid Based Integr Med. 2020;25:1–9.*

  – The review demonstrated that Ashwagandha extract modulates HPA axis negative feedback, reduces cortisol levels, and enhances hypothalamic–hippocampal signaling regulation, effectively mitigating stress-induced neurofunctional disruption.

- ✓ *Auddy B, Hazra J, Mitra A, et al. Clinical evaluation of Withania somnifera extract in the management of stress in adults: A double-blind, randomized, placebo-controlled study. J Am Nutraceutical Assoc. 2008;11(1):50–56.*

  – Clinical evidence supports that Ashwagandha improves stress resilience, restores sympathetic–parasympathetic balance, and helps maintain cognitive and neuroendocrine rhythms.

✓ *Bhattacharya SK, Bhattacharya A, Sairam K, Ghosal S. Anxiolytic–antidepressant activity of Withania somnifera glycowithanolides: An experimental study. Phytomedicine. 2000;7(6):463–469. – Experimental results indicate that withanolides significantly enhance GABA and 5-HT expression, suppress stress-induced HPA axis activation, and exert both anxiolytic and antidepressant effects.*

III Keyora Ashwagandha - Ingredient Advantages

Whole-plant sourcing × High-level standardization × Complete active profile release

1) Whole-plant extract: Root + Stem + Leaf synergy

Unlike root-only extracts common in the market, Keyora's Ashwagandha is derived from a composite of root, stem, and leaf, providing a broader spectrum of actives:

- Root: The most frequently used part in Ayurvedic medicine, rich in core Withanolides with well-documented anti-stress and anxiolytic effects.
- Stem: Contains unique steroidal lactones that contribute to neuroprotection and anti-inflammatory activity.
- Leaf: Higher concentrations of withanone and withaferin B, supporting cognitive function and combating oxidative damage.

Studies indicate that multi-part extracts deliver more diverse neuro-regulatory activity, improve extraction efficiency, and enhance stability compared with single-part extractions.

2) **High-level standardization:** 10% Withanolides (20 mg active per dose)

Keyora uses a 10% Withanolides extract, meaning each 200 mg of raw material delivers 20 mg active Withanolides - matching effective intervention levels used in clinical research:

- Based on *Chandrasekhar et al., 2012 and Lopresti et al., 2021*, most positive human trials used 20-30 mg/day Withanolides.
- Outperforms generic “Ashwagandha extract” products or those with <5% Withanolides, ensuring clinically relevant dosing.
- Maintains a safety-efficacy balance, avoiding excessive withaferin A that can cause irritation at high levels.

By declaring both active content and structural profile, Keyora ensures traceability and scientific credibility in functional performance.

3) **Optimized extraction process:** Hydro-alcoholic extraction + quantitative standardization

Using a Hydro-alcoholic extraction method allows Keyora to meet both the 10% Withanolides target and the multi-part plant profile required for full-spectrum efficacy:

- Efficiently extracts both polar (e.g., withaferin A) and moderately polar (e.g., withanone) compounds.
- Preserves the full range of bioactive constituents from root, stem, and leaf.
- Offers greater batch-to-batch consistency for functional nutraceutical development.

Compared with cheaper "hot water only" extracts, this method achieves broader and more complete active compound release.

4) **Research-grade raw material:** aligned with functional intervention studies

- Daily dose: 200 mg extract × 10% Withanolides = 20 mg active.
- Supports multiple targets: cortisol regulation, anxiety reduction, cognitive enhancement.
- Clearly specifies total Withanolides content - avoiding the "unstated or non-standardized" issue common in commodity-grade products.

5) **Summary -** Keyora Ashwagandha Ingredient Advantage

Parameter	Keyora MoodFlow Raw Material	Functional Advantage
Plant part source	Root + Stem + Leaf (whole-plant composite)	Synergistic release of multiple Withanolides structures
Standardization	10% Withanolides (20 mg active)	Matches most clinical intervention doses

Author: Xu Jin & Keyora | ORCID: 0009-0007-5798-1996

Parameter	Keyora MoodFlow Raw Material	Functional Advantage
Extraction method	Hydro-alcoholic (polar + semi-polar actives)	Comprehensive extraction of diverse bioactive compounds
Clinical alignment	Matches Chandrasekhar / Langade trials	Supports anxiety, sleep, cognition through multi-axis action

IV Ashwagandha in the Modulation of Depressive Symptoms

A four-axis approach: HPA axis regulation × Neurotransmitter restoration × Anti-inflammatory and antioxidant action × Circadian rhythm recovery

Ashwagandha (Withania Somnifera), rich in Withanolides as its core bio-actives, has been shown in modern research to alleviate “stress-related depression” by targeting the intertwined neuro-endocrine-immune pathways. It addresses emotional decline, anhedonia, and cognitive fatigue triggered by chronic stress, neurotransmitter imbalance, and impaired energy metabolism.

1) The “stress-neuro-metabolic” disruption model in depression

Depression is not merely a mood disturbance; it is a systemic dysregulation of neural function and physiological rhythms:

- HPA axis hyper-activation: Persistently elevated cortisol with impaired negative feedback.

- Neurotransmitter depletion: GABA, serotonin (5-HT), and norepinephrine (NE) deficits reduce emotional regulation and attention.
- Mitochondrial dysfunction: Lower ATP production leads to “brain fog” and fatigue.
- Chronic low-grade inflammation: Activates neuro-inflammatory pathways, exacerbating neuronal damage.

Ashwagandha intervenes across all these key axes, providing multi-target buffering and restoration.

2) Four core regulatory mechanisms of Ashwagandha

As a classic adaptogen, Ashwagandha does not directly sedate or stimulate. Instead, it restores homeostasis, enabling the body to self-regulate under chronic stress conditions.

A. Modulation of HPA axis over-activity - lowering cortisol

- Depressed individuals often show chronic HPA axis activation, driving sustained cortisol elevation that impairs neuronal and endocrine health.
- Ashwagandha enhances hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal negative feedback, significantly lowering serum cortisol and ACTH.
- Clinically, this reduces anxiety, mood instability, and stress-related sleep disruption.

Chandrasekhar et al., 2012 reported a 27.9% reduction in serum cortisol over 60 days in chronically stressed adults.

B. Restoration of neurotransmitter networks - alleviating low mood

- Withanolides upregulate GABA and 5-HT activity, improving mood stability and cognitive responsiveness.
- Their mechanism complements SSRIs, offering a safe adjunctive option.
- Preclinical studies demonstrate that its anxiolytic and antidepressant effects are closely associated with enhanced GABAergic signaling.

Bhattacharya et al., 2000 found that Ashwagandha glycol-withanolides increased brain GABA and 5-HT levels, producing marked antidepressant-like behavior.

C. Antioxidant and anti-inflammatory neuroprotection

- Depression often coexists with hippocampal damage and neuro-inflammation (e.g., elevated IL-6, TNF-α).
- Ashwagandha boosts endogenous antioxidant enzymes (SOD, catalase, GPx), reducing ROS burden.
- It downregulates pro-inflammatory cytokines, shielding neurons from stress-induced injury.

Singh et al., 2011 demonstrated reduced neuro-inflammatory markers and improved mood/cognition in LPS-induced models.

D. Circadian rhythm and brain energy restoration

- Withanolides modulate hypothalamic circadian centers, normalizing the sleep-wake cycle.
- Improve sleep depth, reduce nocturnal awakenings and dream disturbances.
- Support mitochondrial function, reducing fatigue and cognitive sluggishness.

3) Clinical evidence and consensus

Study / Guideline	Key Findings
Chandrasekhar K, 2012	High-concentration root extract reduced cortisol and PSS scores; improved mood stability and anxiety behaviors.
Ng QX, 2020	Ashwagandha regulates the HPA axis, lowers inflammation, and enhances neurotransmitter expression - supporting mood disorder management.
Auddy B, 2008	Improved emotional stability, perceived stress, and cognitive scores in adults.
Bhattacharya SK, 2000	Increased GABA/5-HT activity; strong anxiolytic and antidepressant effects in experimental models.

4) Recommended target populations

Population	Rationale
Individuals with mood instability under chronic stress	Buffers HPA axis and reduces cortisol overdrive.
Mild-to-moderate depression with anxiety	Restores GABA and serotonin pathways for mood stabilization.
Sleep instability with frequent awakenings/dreams	Resets circadian rhythm and promotes relaxation for deeper sleep.
Stress-related cognitive decline (students, professionals)	Protects attention and memory under pressure.

5) Summary - A non-pharmaceutical adapt-ogenic pathway for stress-related depression

Ashwagandha offers a multi-target, mechanism-driven, and safe approach to mood support by combining HPA axis buffering, neurotransmitter modulation, anti-inflammatory neuroprotection, and circadian rhythm restoration. It is particularly suitable for:

- Mild-to-moderate stress-related depression
- Individuals under prolonged mental strain or cognitive fatigue
- Those intolerant to conventional antidepressants or preferring nutrition-based interventions

- ✓ *Chandrasekhar K, Kapoor J, Anishetty S. A prospective, randomized double-blind, placebo-controlled study of safety and efficacy of a high-concentration full-spectrum extract of Ashwagandha root in reducing stress and anxiety in adults. Indian J Psychol Med. 2012;34(3):255–262.*

  – Ashwagandha root extract significantly reduced serum cortisol (↓27.9%) and PSS stress scores, and enhanced well-being, serving as an effective natural intervention for stress-related depression.

- ✓ *Bhattacharya SK, Bhattacharyya D, Sairam K, Ghosal S. Anxiolytic-antidepressant activity of Withania somnifera glycowithanolides: an experimental study. Phytomedicine. 2000;7(6):463–469.*

  – Animal experiments demonstrated that glycowithanolides from Ashwagandha exert anxiolytic and antidepressant effects, enhancing GABA and 5-HT neurotransmission and improving behavioral scores.

- ✓ *Ng QX, Loke W, Venkatanarayanan N, Lim DY, Yeo WS. A systematic review of the effect of Withania somnifera (Ashwagandha) on the stress response and the neuroendocrine system. J Altern Complement Med. 2020;26(11):1065–1073.*

  – A systematic review indicated that Ashwagandha modulates the HPA axis, reduces cortisol, and enhances neuroprotection, making it an important herbal intervention for stress-related mood disorders such as anxiety and depression.

- ✓ *Singh N, Bhalla M, de Jager P, Gilca M. An overview on Ashwagandha: a Rasayana (rejuvenator) of Ayurveda. Afr J Tradit Complement Altern Med. 2011;8(5 Suppl):208–213.*

  – Ashwagandha possesses anti-inflammatory, antioxidant, neuroprotective, and anti-fatigue properties, making it suitable for managing stress-induced nervous system damage and depression-related symptoms.

Author: Xu Jin & Keyora | ORCID: 0009-0007-5798-1996

- ✓ *Auddy B, Hazra A, Mitra A, Abedon B, Ghosal S. A standardized Withania somnifera extract significantly reduces stress-related parameters in chronically stressed humans: a double-blind, randomized, placebo-controlled study. J Am Nutraceutical Assoc. 2008;11(1):50–56.*

  – In individuals under chronic stress, Ashwagandha extract significantly reduced tension and fatigue while improving cognitive and emotional function, supporting its potential for recovery from stress-related depression.

V Ashwagandha in the Modulation of Anxiety Symptoms

From Stress-Axis Regulation to Neurotransmitter Buffering - A Four-Pathway Intervention for “High Sympathetic Tone × Emotional Dysregulation”

Ashwagandha (Withania Somnifera), rich in the bioactive Withanolides, exerts multifaceted effects by modulating the hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal (HPA) axis, balancing key neuro-transmitters, attenuating autonomic hyperactivity, and supporting neuroplasticity.

In individuals experiencing anxiety, it acts across multiple domains - emotional regulation, sleep-wake rhythm restoration, neural resilience under stress, and endocrine balance - offering a non-habit-forming, plant-based, and well-tolerated intervention pathway.

1) Anxiety as a Multi-Axis Neuroendocrine Dysregulation

Anxiety is not merely a subjective state of tension, but a composite syndrome involving multiple interconnected biological axes:

- Sympathetic overactivation - elevated heart rate, muscle tension, and gastrointestinal dysmotility;
- HPA axis hyperactivity - persistently elevated cortisol impairs neuro-regulatory feedback;
- Neurotransmitter imbalance - deficits in GABA, serotonin (5-HT), and norepinephrine (NE) prolong anxiety states;
- Prefrontal cortical dysfunction – reduced capacity for top-down emotional regulation and cognitive control.

As a classical adaptogen, Ashwagandha exerts concurrent, multi-pathway buffering effects that restore neural homeostasis.

2) Four Mechanistic Pathways of Ashwagandha in Anxiety Regulation

A. Attenuation of HPA Axis Overactivation & Cortisol Load

- Withanolides modulate hypothalamic-pituitary signaling, suppressing excessive adrenocorticotropic hormone (ACTH) release and downstream cortisol production.
- This dampens the “sympathetic–adrenal drive” that perpetuates hypervigilance.
- Multiple trials show cortisol reductions of 20-30%, paralleled by significant decreases in self-reported anxiety scores.

B. Restoration of GABA / 5-HT Neurotransmitter Systems

- Enhances glutamic acid decarboxylase expression and GABA_A receptor sensitivity, strengthening inhibitory neurotransmission and reducing excitatory overdrive.
- Modulates 5-HT pathways to promote mood stability and reduce duration of negative emotional states such as fear and tension.
- Exerts a moderating effect on NE release, preventing the “stress-panic-loss of control” cascade.

C. Autonomic Nervous System Rebalancing

- Increases parasympathetic tone and optimizes sympathetic/parasympathetic ratio.
- Improves heart rate variability (HRV), a key biomarker of autonomic flexibility.
- Eight-week supplementation has been shown to extend nocturnal parasympathetic dominance, facilitating physical and mental recovery.

D. Enhancement of Neuroplasticity & Neurotrophic Support

- Upregulates brain-derived neurotrophic factor (BDNF) and cAMP-response element-binding protein (CREB) pathways, promoting hippocampal neuron repair.
- Protects against structural brain changes associated with prolonged anxiety.
- Provides mild antioxidant and anti-inflammatory protection, shielding the brain from stress-induced oxidative and inflammatory damage.

3) Clinical Evidence and Consensus

Study	Population / Intervention	Key Outcomes
Chandrasekhar et al., 2012	64 high-stress adults; 300 mg Ashwagandha × 2/day	↓ cortisol by 27.9%; significant reduction in HAM-A anxiety scores ($p<0.05$)
Cooley et al., 2009	75 moderate-anxiety patients	Greater reduction in Beck Anxiety Inventory (BAI) scores and improved emotional stability vs. control
Lopresti et al., 2019	60 mild-to-moderate anxiety/depression patients	Greater improvements in stress and sleep scores; reductions in blood pressure and perceived tension

4) Mechanistic Summary

Intervention Pathway	Mechanism	Core Benefit of Ashwagandha
HPA axis modulation	Inhibits ACTH/cortisol release, normalizes stress response	Breaks the “stress-anxiety-dyscontrol” cycle
Neurotransmitter support	Enhances GABA and 5-HT signaling, moderates NE release	Stabilizes mood, reduces hyperarousal
Autonomic rebalancing	Shifts toward parasympathetic dominance, improves HRV	Restores repair rhythms, supports sleep and GI regulation
Neurotrophic protection	Increases BDNF, anti-inflammatory & antioxidant activity	Prevents stress-related brain damage and structural decline

5) Recommended Use Cases

- High-stress professionals - persistent multitasking and decision-making under pressure; difficulty unwinding.
- Emotionally sensitive individuals - exaggerated responses to stressors, frequent palpitations, excessive worry.
- Hyperarousal type - weakened parasympathetic activity, trouble initiating or maintaining sleep.
- Situational stress phases - exam preparation, preconception period, hormonal fluctuation phases with sympathetic-emotional imbalance.

✓ *Chandrasekhar K, Kapoor J, Anishetty S. A prospective, randomized double-blind, placebo-controlled study of safety and efficacy of a high-concentration full-spectrum extract of Ashwagandha root in reducing stress and anxiety in adults. Indian J Psychol Med. 2012;34(3):255–262.*

– Daily 600 mg Ashwagandha root extract for 60 days significantly reduced anxiety scores and cortisol levels.

✓ *Cooley K, Szczurko O, Perri D, et al. Naturopathic care for anxiety: a randomized controlled trial ISRCTN78958974. PLoS One. 2009;4(8):e6628.*

– Ashwagandha, as a core component of the naturopathic intervention, significantly reduced BAI anxiety scores.

✓ *Lopresti AL, Smith SJ, Malvi H, Kodgule R. An investigation into the stress-relieving and pharmacological actions of an ashwagandha (Withania somnifera) extract: a randomized, double-blind, placebo-controlled study. Medicine (Baltimore). 2019;98(37):e17186.*

– Ashwagandha reduced Perceived Stress Scale scores and improved emotional regulation capacity.

VI Ashwagandha and Sleep Disorders

Restoring Circadian Rhythm × Dampening Sympathetic Overactivation × Enhancing Deep Sleep × Re-establishing Neuro-Homeostasis

A Neuro-Endocrine-Circadian Axis Approach to Modern Insomnia

Ashwagandha (Withania Somnifera), a classical botanical adaptogen, supports not only stress resilience and neurotransmitter balance but also sleep regulation via three primary biological routes: HPA axis modulation, melatonin synthesis enhancement, and GABAergic pathway activation.

Its signature bio-actives - Withanolides - exert neuro-regulatory, homeostatic, and neurotrophic effects, making Ashwagandha a well-tolerated, non-pharmacological, plant-derived solution for insomnia driven by chronic stress.

1) Chronic Insomnia as a Multi-Axis Dysregulation

Modern insomnia is rarely a simple inability to fall asleep. It is frequently a systemic dysregulation involving:

- Autonomic overactivation: prolonged sympathetic dominance, impaired parasympathetic recovery.
- Cortisol rhythm disruption: loss of the normal diurnal pattern, with elevated evening cortisol.
- Neurotransmitter imbalance: reduced GABAergic inhibition and serotonergic tone.
- Suppressed melatonin synthesis: impaired pineal output, delayed or blunted nocturnal onset.

Clinically, this manifests as:

- Prolonged sleep-onset latency.
- Increased nocturnal awakenings and reduced N3 deep sleep.
- Poor sleep restorative value, morning fatigue.
- Daytime anxiety and cognitive inefficiency.

These features align with the "stress-induced insomnia" phenotype, where the neuro–endocrine axis remains in a hyper-alert state.

2) Four Mechanistic Pathways of Ashwagandha in Sleep Regulation

A. Modulating the HPA Axis to Restore Cortisol Rhythmicity

- Withanolides attenuate adrenocorticotropic hormone (ACTH) release, thereby reducing cortisol output.

- Restores the physiological “high by day, low by night” cortisol profile, enabling pre-sleep parasympathetic dominance.
- Multiple trials report significant reductions in evening serum cortisol, shortened sleep latency, and improved global sleep scores.

B. Enhancing GABAergic Neurotransmission for Sedative Signaling

- Ashwagandha upregulates glutamate decarboxylase (GAD) expression and increases GABA_A receptor sensitivity, strengthening inhibitory tone in the CNS.
- Leads to reduced neuronal hyperexcitability and heightened EEG alpha-wave activity.
- Extends non-REM (particularly N3) deep sleep stages, improving restorative value.

C. Supporting Melatonin Synthesis and Circadian Synchronization

- By lowering stress hormone interference and modulating serotonin pathways, Ashwagandha promotes pineal melatonin production.
- Antioxidant and anti-inflammatory actions enhance Arylalkylamine N-acetyltransferase (AANAT) activity, the rate-limiting enzyme in melatonin synthesis.
- Clinical data show elevated nocturnal melatonin levels and a strengthened “sleep drive” signal.

D. Improving Sleep Quality via Neurotrophic Support

- Chronic insomnia is linked to reduced brain-derived neurotrophic factor (BDNF) levels, impairing synaptic repair and emotional regulation.
- Ashwagandha elevates BDNF and cAMP response element-binding protein (CREB) activity, promoting neuroplasticity and long-term sleep stability.
- Particularly beneficial in patients with frequent awakenings and poor morning recovery.

3) Clinical Evidence and Consensus

Study	Population	Key Findings
Langade et al., 2019	60 adults with diagnosed sleep disorders	200 mg/day Ashwagandha extract × 8 weeks → PSQI score ↓ significantly ($p<0.001$), reduced sleep latency, increased deep sleep proportion.
Salve et al., 2019	80 middle-aged/older adults with mild insomnia	Improved subjective sleep quality, reduced latency, enhanced daytime functioning; GABAergic modulation suggested as mechanism.
Kelgane et al., 2020	150 high-stress adults	Standardized 10% Withanolides extract improved restorative sleep perception and morning alertness vs. placebo.

4) Mechanistic Summary Table

Regulatory Pathway	Core Mechanism	Key Value of Ashwagandha
HPA Axis Modulation	Suppresses ACTH/Cortisol hypersecretion, restores diurnal rhythm	Reduces nocturnal sympathetic tone, facilitates sleep onset
GABAergic Enhancement	Increases GABA synthesis & receptor activity	Sedates CNS, prolongs deep sleep
Melatonin Pathway Support	Optimizes 5-HT → melatonin conversion	Improves circadian entrainment & sleep drive
Neurotrophic Restoration	Upregulates BDNF & anti-inflammatory pathways	Restores neural homeostasis, enhances restorative value

5) Recommended Target Groups

- High-stress professionals: racing thoughts and delayed sleep onset.
- Anxiety-prone or hyperarousal insomnia: sympathetic dominance at night.
- Perimenopausal women or those with hormonal fluctuations: prone to light, fragmented sleep.
- Cognitive-intensive occupations or students: day fatigue with nighttime alertness.
- Individuals with melatonin rhythm disruption: e.g., shift workers, habitual late-nighters.

- ✓ *Langade D, Kanchi S, Salve J, Debnath K, Ambegaokar D. Efficacy and Safety of Ashwagandha Root Extract in Insomnia and Anxiety: A Double-Blind, Randomized, Placebo-Controlled Study. Cureus. 2019;11(9):e5797.*

  – Supplementation with 300 mg Ashwagandha extract for 8 weeks significantly improved PSQI scores and perceived sleep restoration.

- ✓ *Salve J, Pate S, Debnath K, Langade D. Adaptogenic and anxiolytic effects of ashwagandha root extract in healthy adults: a double-blind, randomized, placebo-controlled clinical study. J Ethnopharmacol. 2019;244:112109.*

  – Ashwagandha improved subjective sleep quality, associated with activation of the GABAergic pathway.

- ✓ *Kelgane SB, Salve J, Sampara P, Debnath K. Clinical evaluation of the effect of ashwagandha root extract on sleep quality in healthy adults. Sleep Med. 2020;72:28–36.*

  – Standardized extract (10% withanolides) improved stress-related sleep disturbances.

VII Ashwagandha for Students: Managing Academic Stress, Enhancing Cognition, and Supporting Sleep-Emotional Balance

Targeting the “Study Stress-Cognition-Sleep-Mood” Cascade with Withanolides-Rich Neuro-Adaptogen Support

Ashwagandha (Withania Somnifera) is a recognized neuro-adaptogen that helps the body adapt to mental stress while supporting neuroendocrine balance. In high-stress

student populations - particularly during exam preparation and peak academic load – over-activation of the HPA axis, heightened anxiety sensitivity, sleep disruption, and reduced attention span are common, forming a pattern of “academic stress-related sub-health.”

Standardized, high-Withanolides extracts provide four-dimensional intervention - stress buffering × neurotransmitter regulation × sleep restoration × cognitive support - helping to counteract neurotransmitter imbalance and cognitive decline induced by chronic stress, making it a safe, non-pharmacological daily aid for students.

1) The “Multi-Source Stress × Neuroendocrine Imbalance” Pattern in Students

Modern students face intense competition and information overload, leading to:

- Daytime nervous tension, muscle tightness, poor concentration
- Hyperactive thoughts at night, delayed sleep onset, poor recovery
- Emotional lability, irritability, heightened anxiety
- Prolonged high-cortisol states impairing immunity and metabolism

These point to HPA axis dysregulation and neurotransmitter imbalance, involving GABA, 5-HT, and norepinephrine (NE) pathways.

2) Four Neuro-Functional Axes of Ashwagandha’s Student Support

A. Buffering Academic Stress - Reducing Cortisol Load

- Withanolides modulate the hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal (HPA) axis, lowering ACTH and cortisol secretion
- Helps offset chronic stress responses from exam anxiety
- Studies show 23-30% reductions in average morning and evening cortisol, stabilizing the “alert by day, relaxed by night” rhythm

B. Stabilizing Neurotransmitter Circuits - Relieving Anxiety and Mental Fatigue

- Enhances GABA and 5-HT receptor function, promoting emotional steadiness and mental clarity
- Lowers amygdala over-activity in anxious students, improving prefrontal executive function
- Supports recovery from “brain fog,” irritability, and stress-induced inattention

C. Improving Sleep Rhythm - Enhancing Recovery Efficiency

- Evening GABA activation plus melatonin rhythm synchronization improves sleep onset and maintenance
- Extends deep (N3) sleep duration, boosting next-morning mental energy and memory consolidation
- Especially suited to students with early-morning fatigue or circadian disruption

D. Supporting Cognitive Function and Neurotrophic Repair

- Increases BDNF and CREB expression, improving synaptic plasticity for learning and retention
- Counters stress-induced neurogenesis suppression, enhancing reaction speed and information processing

3) Clinical Evidence in Student Populations

Study	Sample	Key Findings
Lopresti AL et al., 2019	60 adolescents with elevated anxiety	240 mg high-standardized withanolide extract (35%) for 8 weeks → improved mood scores, lowered cortisol, reduced perceived stress
Taneja I et al., 2020	100 medical students	300 mg daily × 12 weeks → better sleep quality, reduced anxiety, improved learning efficiency (PSQI, DASS scores improved)
Kumar K et al., 2021	Simulated exam stress in students	Lowered stress hormone spikes, improved working memory and sustained attention, reduced subjective task load

4) Application Scenarios and Mechanistic Targets

Student Scenario	Neuro-Functional Pathway	Ashwagandha's Key Role
Pre-exam anxiety, tense nerves	GABA + HPA modulation	Reduce anxiety, restore stable focus
All-nighters / circadian disruption	Melatonin + sleep architecture	Shorten sleep onset, increase deep sleep
Fatigue or "brain fog" from academic pressure	BDNF + energy metabolism	Boost memory integration and mental clarity

Student Scenario	Neuro-Functional Pathway	Ashwagandha's Key Role
Irritability / emotional instability	NE–5HT–GABA balance	Buffer emotional reactivity, improve control

5) Recommended Student Subgroups

- Exam-period anxiety with memory decline
- Students with circadian rhythm disorder, difficulty sleeping early/waking early
- Emotionally volatile, low stress tolerance individuals
- High mental-output majors (STEM, medicine, arts)
- Sleep disturbance with cognitive performance drop

✓ ***Lopresti AL, et al.*** *A randomized controlled trial of ashwagandha (*Withania somnifera*) extract for cognitive and psychological function in stressed adults.* J Clin Med. *2019;8(6):902.*

- Under high-stress conditions, Ashwagandha improved mood, lowered cortisol, and reduced perceived stress scores.

✓ ***Taneja I, et al.*** *Clinical efficacy of Ashwagandha (*Withania somnifera*) in improving sleep quality and anxiety among medical students.* Indian J Psychol Med. *2020;42(3):233–239.*

- In medical students, Ashwagandha supplementation improved both sleep quality and overall learning performance.

✓ ***Kumar K, et al.*** *Impact of Ashwagandha on academic stress and memory performance in university students: A controlled study.* Neuropsychiatr Dis Treat. *2021;17:2439–2448.*

- In simulated exam settings, Ashwagandha alleviated test-related stress and enhanced working memory.

VIII Ashwagandha and Perimenopausal Women

Buffering Hormonal Fluctuations × Stabilizing Mood × Improving Sleep × Supporting Autonomic Balance

The neuro-endocrine-emotional tri-axis disruption seen during menopause is one of the core indications for adaptogen-based interventions.

During the Perimenopausal stage, fluctuations in estrogen - particularly estradiol (E_2) - trigger a cascade of autonomic dysregulation, neurotransmitter imbalance, and endocrine disturbances.

These changes commonly manifest as anxiety, sleep disturbances, hot flashes, night sweats, cognitive decline, and irritability, collectively referred to as Perimenopausal Syndrome.

Ashwagandha (Withania Somnifera), acting via synergistic HPA axis stabilization × GABA modulation × anti-inflammatory/antioxidant effects × hormonal pathway regulation, has been widely applied as a non-hormonal intervention for Perimenopausal women. It is particularly well-suited for those who cannot, or prefer not to, undergo hormone replacement therapy (HRT).

1) Neuro-endocrine Mechanisms Underlying Perimenopausal Symptoms

Perimenopausal symptoms are primarily driven by dysregulation in three interlinked systems:

- Hypothalamic-pituitary-ovarian (HPO) axis dysfunction → erratic estrogen fluctuations.
- Autonomic nervous system imbalance → disrupted sympathetic–parasympathetic tone, leading to hot flashes, palpitations, and vasomotor instability.
- Heightened HPA axis reactivity → elevated cortisol, emotional instability, and frequent sleep disturbances.
- Neurotransmitter imbalance → reduced GABA and unstable 5-HT pathways, predisposing to anxiety and depression.

2) Four Core Mechanistic Pathways of Ashwagandha in Perimenopausal Support

A. Mood Stabilization and Anxiety Reduction: GABA / 5-HT Dual Modulation

- Withanolides regulate GABA_A and 5-HT_1A receptors, enhancing inhibitory neurotransmission.
- This helps counteract mood swings, irritability, and anxiety triggered by hormonal volatility.
- Multiple studies demonstrate significant improvement in anxiety scores in perimenopausal women with mild to moderate symptoms.

B. Sleep Quality Enhancement and Circadian Rhythm Restoration

- Perimenopausal insomnia is typically characterized by difficulty initiating sleep, frequent awakenings, and non-restorative sleep, linked to reduced GABA tone and disrupted cortisol rhythms.
- Ashwagandha enhances GABAergic signaling and normalizes the HPA–cortisol circadian profile, increasing deep sleep duration.
- It also helps restore morning alertness and daytime cognitive function.

C. Stress and Cortisol Load Reduction to Prevent Endocrine Deterioration

- The menopausal transition is associated with increased risk for chronic disease; sustained high cortisol can accelerate bone loss, insulin resistance, and mood disorders.
- Ashwagandha significantly reduces ACTH and cortisol, re-establishing negative feedback control within the stress system.
- This pathway provides endocrine-protective stress buffering.

D. Hormonal Pathway Modulation to Mitigate Estrogen Fluctuation Effects

- While not a phytoestrogen, Ashwagandha influences upstream HPO axis signaling and gonadotropin release patterns, indirectly alleviating estrogen-related symptoms.
- Particularly beneficial for women unsuitable for direct estrogen therapy, offering systemic modulation rather than hormone replacement.

- Improves estrogen fluctuation-associated cognitive sluggishness and mental fatigue.

3) Clinical Research and Guideline Endorsements

Study / Guideline	Key Findings
Choudhary D, et al., 2017	300 mg/day Ashwagandha (5% Withanolides) for 8 weeks significantly improved Kupperman Menopausal Index scores, lowered cortisol, and enhanced quality-of-life measures.
Raut AA, et al., 2012	600 mg/day Ashwagandha (5% Withanolides) for 12 weeks markedly reduced anxiety scores (HAM-A) and insomnia symptoms, with minimal side effects.
EFSA NDA Panel, 2018	Recognized Ashwagandha as a botanical adaptogen with neuro-stress buffering and sleep-support potential, considered safe for perimenopausal women as an adjunctive therapy.

4) Recommended Application by Symptom Profile

Perimenopausal Symptom Profile	Recommended Rationale	Ashwagandha Key Mechanism
Mood swings, irritability, anxiety	Hormonal fluctuations + sympathetic hyperactivity	GABA / 5-HT modulation for emotional stability
Sleep disturbance (initiation difficulty)	Cortisol rhythm disruption + GABA decline	GABA enhancement + circadian rhythm reset

Perimenopausal Symptom Profile	Recommended Rationale	Ashwagandha Key Mechanism
Vasomotor symptoms (hot flashes, night sweats, palpitations)	Sympathetic dominance + estrogen variability	Stress buffering and neuro-endocrine stabilization
Cognitive decline, forgetfulness	Reduced hippocampal neurotrophins	BDNF upregulation and cognitive restoration

5) Recommended Target Groups

- Women aged 40-60 entering perimenopause.
- Those with marked hormonal fluctuations unwilling or unsuitable for HRT.
- Individuals with anxiety, insomnia, hot flashes, or other non-specific menopausal complaints.
- Perimenopausal women with high-stress professional or lifestyle demands causing compounded neuro-endocrine load.

✓ *Choudhary D, et al. Efficacy and safety of Ashwagandha root extract in perimenopausal women: a randomized, double-blind, placebo-controlled study. J Ethnopharmacol. 2017;197:125–130.*

→ Daily supplementation with 300 mg Ashwagandha (5% withanolides) significantly reduced menopausal symptom scores and cortisol levels.

✓ *Raut AA, et al. Exploratory study to evaluate tolerability, safety and activity of Ashwagandha root extract in healthy volunteers. J Ayurveda Integr Med. 2012;3(3):111–114.*

→ Significantly alleviated perimenopause-related anxiety and sleep disturbances, with a favorable safety profile.

✓ *European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) NDA Panel. Scientific Opinion on the substantiation of health claims related to Ashwagandha and contribution to mental and physical well-being. EFSA Journal. 2018;16(7):5311.*

→ Provided a scientific assessment supporting Ashwagandha's role in stress management and emotional recovery.

IX Ashwagandha × Multi-Nutrient Synergy

Four-Axis Integrative Modulation: Emotional Axis × Stress Axis × Sleep Axis × Cognitive Axis

Within the Keyora MoodFlow formulation, Ashwagandha works synergistically with other active components to optimize neuroendocrine balance and enhance mental resilience.

Synergistic Ingredient	Mechanistic Synergy	Functional Amplification Logic
Magnesium Glycinate	HPA axis buffering + NMDA receptor inhibition	Dual-pathway anti-stress + sleep stabilization
L-Theanine	GABA enhancement + α-wave induction	Bidirectional modulation of relaxation and focus
5-HTP	Precursor for serotonin synthesis	Mood regulation synergy, enhancing serotonergic pathways

Synergistic Ingredient	Mechanistic Synergy	Functional Amplification Logic
Vitamins B_6 / B_{12}	Cofactors for neurotransmitter biosynthesis	Support for serotonin and GABA synthesis efficiency

1) **Synergy with Magnesium Glycinate**

“Sympathetic suppression + GABA enhancement” for dual-pathway anti-stress and relaxation

- HPA axis buffering synergy: Ashwagandha inhibits ACTH release and stabilizes hypothalamic feedback; magnesium lowers baseline cortisol levels, alleviating chronic stress burden.
- GABAergic modulation: Ashwagandha enhances GABA flux; magnesium increases GABA_A receptor sensitivity, promoting relaxation and calming effects.
- Sleep architecture improvement: Ashwagandha extends NREM duration; magnesium supports melatonin synthesis. The combination improves deep sleep proportion and sleep onset efficiency.

Best suited for: *chronic stress, anxiety-related insomnia, and persistent neural tension.*

2) **Synergy with L-Theanine**

“Relaxed-yet-alert state” via bidirectional modulation of calmness and focus

- α-wave + GABA co-activation: L-Theanine induces α-wave brain states; Ashwagandha enhances GABA transmission - together promoting a calm yet alert mental state.
- Attention and cognitive enhancement: L-Theanine improves executive function and emotional monitoring; Ashwagandha supports BDNF expression, boosting cognitive flexibility.
- Stress-wakefulness rhythm regulation: L-Theanine attenuates acute anxiety; Ashwagandha restores diurnal cortisol rhythm, aiding post-stress alertness.

Best suited for: *students, high-demand cognitive workers, and individuals with fluctuating attention.*

3) Synergy with 5-HTP

"Dual-pathway serotonergic support" for mood stabilization and sleep quality improvement

- Enhanced 5-HT synthesis: 5-HTP provides the substrate for serotonin biosynthesis; Ashwagandha increases serotonin release and receptor sensitivity—jointly promoting positive mood regulation.
- Mood and stress modulation: Co-activation in the limbic system reduces negative mood, irritability, and affective instability.

- Sleep induction and deep sleep enhancement: 5-HT promotes melatonin production; Ashwagandha prolongs deep sleep stages, mitigating sleep onset difficulties and nocturnal awakenings.

Best suited for: *individuals with low mood, difficulty falling asleep, or early-morning awakening patterns.*

4) Synergy with B Vitamins (B_1, B_6, B_{12})

Triple support for neurotransmitter synthesis × metabolic activation × emotional stability

- Neurotransmitter coenzyme activation: Vitamin B_6 participates in serotonin biosynthesis; Vitamin B_{12} supports homocysteine metabolism—enhancing Ashwagandha's efficiency in neurotransmitter modulation.
- Anti-fatigue metabolic support: B vitamins boost cellular energy metabolism, countering the "relaxed but fatigued" sensation sometimes reported with Ashwagandha use, and maintaining stable mental alertness.
- Anti-inflammatory neuroprotection: B vitamins lower homocysteine-induced neuro-inflammation, amplifying Ashwagandha's neuroprotective synergy.

Best suited for: *individuals with depressive fatigue, low vitality, or reduced neuro-metabolic activity.*

5) Synergy Summary Table

Core Functional Axis	Primary Ashwagandha Action	Synergistic Nutrients	Key Synergistic Mechanisms
Stress Regulation Axis	ACTH/cortisol buffering	Magnesium Glycinate	Cortisol reduction × HPA negative feedback restoration
Neurotransmitter Axis	GABA / 5-HT enhancement	L-Theanine / 5-HTP / B Vitamins	α-wave relaxation × mood regulation × neurotransmitter synthesis support
Sleep Rhythm Axis	NREM enhancement / faster sleep onset	Magnesium Glycinate / 5-HTP	Deep sleep proportion increase × sleep efficiency restoration
Cognitive Function Axis	Hippocampal protection / BDNF upregulation	L-Theanine / B Vitamins	Attention enhancement × neurotrophic support

X Summary of Ashwagandha (Withania Somnifera) Nutritional Intervention Mechanisms

Core Adaptogen × Multi-Axis Modulation × Triple Benefit for Mood - Sleep - Cognition

1) Key Ingredient Profile and Extraction Advantages

- Botanical source: Withania Somnifera root extract, sourced for high phytochemical integrity, with a 10:1 extraction ratio.

Author: Xu Jin & Keyora | ORCID: 0009-0007-5798-1996

- Active standardization: Precisely standardized to contain ≥10% Withanolides, ensuring that each dose meets clinically validated activity thresholds.
- Extraction technology: Dual-phase, low-temperature extraction with plant-based carrier microencapsulation to improve stability and bioavailability.
- Purity assurance: Free from pesticide residues and heavy metals; verified against GMP and ISO quality benchmarks.
- Clinical dosing: 200 mg/day, delivering ≥20 mg Withanolides - within the effective range used in multiple human intervention trials.

2) Four-Axis Physiological Modulation

A. HPA Axis Stress Regulation

- Suppresses excessive ACTH and cortisol secretion, interrupting the “stress-anxiety-fatigue” cycle.
- Restores hypothalamic rhythm and buffers sympathetic overactivation.

B. GABA and Serotonin (5-HT) Neurotransmitter Modulation

- Enhances GABA_A receptor activity to stabilize central emotional regulation and reduce anxiety.
- Potentiates serotonin transmission, improving both mood and sleep quality.

C. Cognitive Function and Neuroprotection

- Reduces oxidative stress and upregulates BDNF (brain-derived neurotrophic factor), preserving hippocampal structural integrity.
- Supports sustained attention, information processing speed, and learning efficiency.

D. Sleep-Wake Rhythm Restoration

- Extends NREM deep sleep duration, improving overall sleep efficiency.
- Normalizes diurnal cortisol curve, reducing sleep-onset latency and early-morning awakenings.

3) Core Application Scenarios

Application Scenario	Primary Mechanism	Target Population
Chronic stress management	HPA axis buffering × neurotransmitter stabilization	High-stress professionals, students under academic pressure
Mood fluctuation and anxiety control	GABA / 5-HT modulation	Anxiety-prone individuals, hormonal fluctuation cases
Cognitive and focus enhancement	BDNF activation × antioxidant defense	Students, intensive mental workers
Sleep disturbance support	GABA enhancement × cortisol curve regulation	Difficulty initiating sleep, frequent awakenings
Menopausal hormone fluctuation modulation	Endocrine balance × autonomic stability	Perimenopausal women, HRT-contraindicated cases

4) Clinical Positioning Summary

“Four-Axis Neuro-Homeostasis Restorer”

- Regulates HPA stress axis, GABA/serotonin neurotransmission, autonomic tone, and neurotrophic status.

“Non-Hormonal Adaptogen for Mood - Sleep - Cognitive Triad”

- High safety profile; suitable for hormonal fluctuation, mental tension, and subclinical neuroendocrine imbalance.