

Understanding health and wellness trends and how they impact the cognitive health market

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Health and wellness trends help to drive advancements throughout the functional food and beverage industry. Consumers are choosing more and more foods with added nutritional value to help them meet health goals.

Image Credit: Atlantia Clinical Trials

In recent years, the entire industry has experienced exponential growth. This article will explore how scientifically validating products will ensure success among modern consumers and analyze the shift in consumer trends.



Global life expectancy is rising exponentially, leading to an aging population and demonstrating a promising business opportunity.

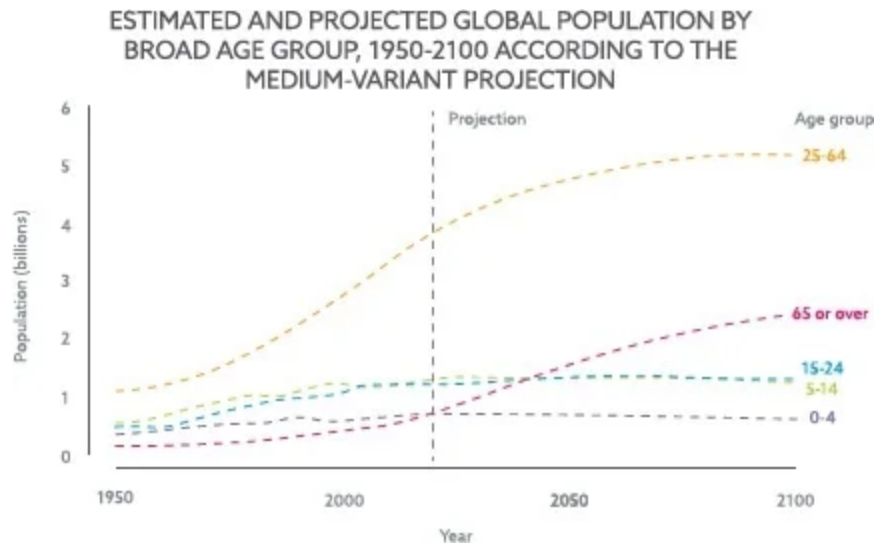


Image Credit: Atlantia Clinical Trials

This aging market results in an increasing need to supply additional preventative methods, driving disease prevention over treatment for as long as possible – this is frequently referred to as the ‘healthy aging’ market.

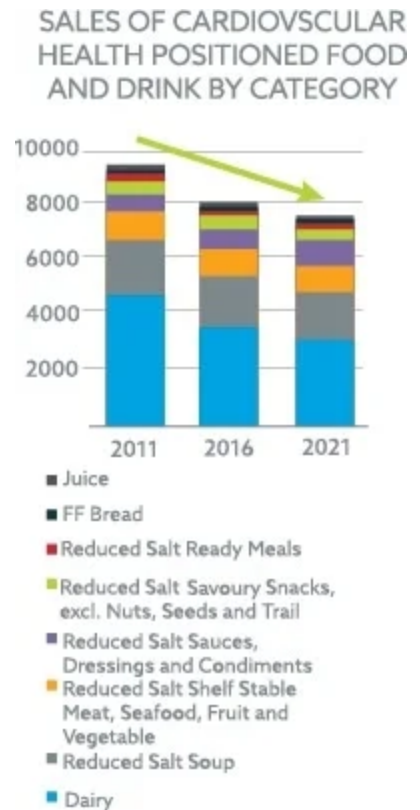
Functional foods and supplements play a significant role, offering considerable scope to reform the cardiovascular health sector - one of the most important market segments, but has shown a sharp decline in recent times.

Image Credit: Atlantia Clinical Trials

A recent IFIC report highlighted that in 2019, heart health fell from first to fourth place in terms of the health benefits that consumers were looking for in foods, with weight management, energy and digestive benefits overtaking this.

Image Credit: Atlantia Clinical Trials

Despite this shift in general demand, heart health remains one of the most important benefits that customers aged 50 and older seek in foods.



USD 8.2 billion



Reviving the cardiovascular market

The report also highlighted a notable innovation, primarily attributed to the emergence of stringent regulations around health claims which in turn led to the decline.

Education remains key to the revival of this market segment, and it is essential that consumers gain increased knowledge of functional ingredients so that they are able to differentiate between proven and misleading claims more effectively.

Consumers are seen to be taking a more 'holistic and long term' approach to weight management and overall wellbeing, with weight management and wellbeing considered less important than wider healthy living and wellness concerns.

Consumers are now adopting lifestyles whereby “weight management is de-emphasized”. There is a renewed focus on informed customers purchasing natural, trustworthy products with functional ingredients that help them meet their specific health and lifestyle goals.

US: WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING MOTIVATES YOU TO EAT HEALTHILY?, % OF CONSUMERS WHO AGREE, BY AGE (MAY 2018)

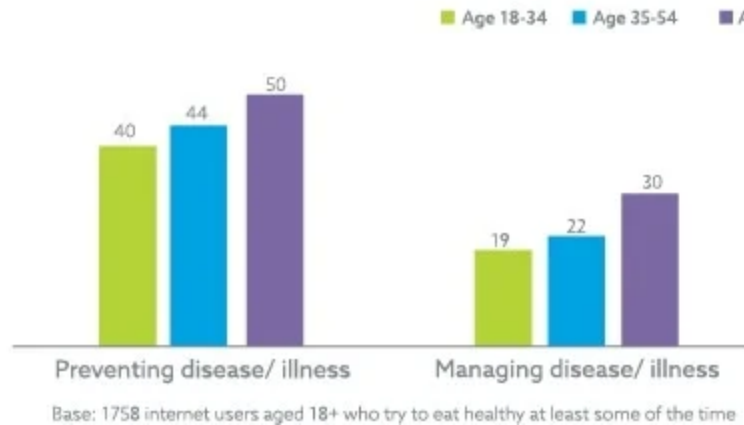


Image Credit: Atlantia Clinical Trials

It is imperative that these products are easy to use and understand (Euromonitor, 2018). These findings highlight the overall trend towards ‘weight management and nutrition.



Image Credit: Atlantia Clinical Trials

Now, in health studies validated imaging biomarkers have shown benefits of food ingredients on wall structure and endothelial function of arteries.

Also, in these studies favorable effects on blood pressure and insulin resistance - both signs of metabolic syndrome – were observed.

Diet therefore plays a key role in the prevention of cardio- and cerebrovascular, and their related diseases. These findings support the notion of implementation of innovative and efficacious dietary ingredients can help to preserve cardiovascular health and wellbeing”.

Eric de Groot, MD PhD, Expert on Imaging Biomarkers of Cardiovascular Health, Investigator of Inflammatory Bowel Diseases and Atherosclerosis

The Hartman Group’s Functional Food & Beverage Report (2020) found that most consumers were using supplements, functional foods and beverages to boost immunity and improve general prevention.

Image Credit: Atlantia Clinical Trials

The report also highlighted that mood, energy and digestive health remained among the most frequently sought health benefits from foods and beverages.

Adding new functional benefits with scientifically supported ingredients, therefore, is key; for example, digestive or immune support via the addition of probiotics to foods like snack bars or mood enhancement by adding botanical ingredients to a beverage.



The impact of COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic has prompted an array of questions around how the immune system functions and how this can be better supported via nutrition.

Image Credit: Atlantia Clinical Trials

These wide-ranging questions around immunity have also increased the chance of encountering misinformation, clearly illustrating the power and importance of scientifically validated health products among contemporary consumers.

In terms of the range of global products launched between 2014 and 2019 with an immune system claim, 58% of these contained vitamins and 48% contained minerals. The most common vitamins used for immune system support were vitamins C, D and B6, while zinc was the most common mineral.

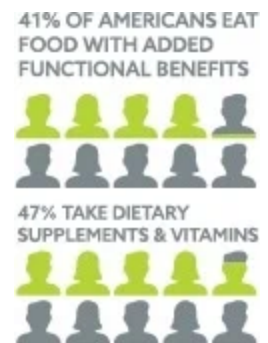


Image Credit: Atlantia Clinical Trials

Consumer perceptions of immune system boosting products vary across continents; for example, Vitamin C, Vitamin A and zinc are the primary choices in North America, while iron is most frequently associated with improved immune health in Africa, Europe and Asia Pacific (FMCG).



We now know bacteria have very important roles in normal physiology... Lack of diversity tends to lead to frailty in the elderly. Poor diet is undoubtedly the main contributory factor, the really significant one, to an unhealthy microbiota

The general consensus is that fermented foods such as yogurt and sauerkraut have health benefits. To have a truly good microbiota, we should be consuming prebiotics

It goes without saying, if someone takes multiple courses of antibiotics, it can wipe out the microbiota and have a very negative effect”.

Professor Ted Dinan, Medical Director, Atlantia

The pandemic has led to changing attitudes, fostering a culture of preventative care, with many consumers prioritizing their mental wellness in addition to their physical wellness and taking tangible action to address depression, stress and anxiety.

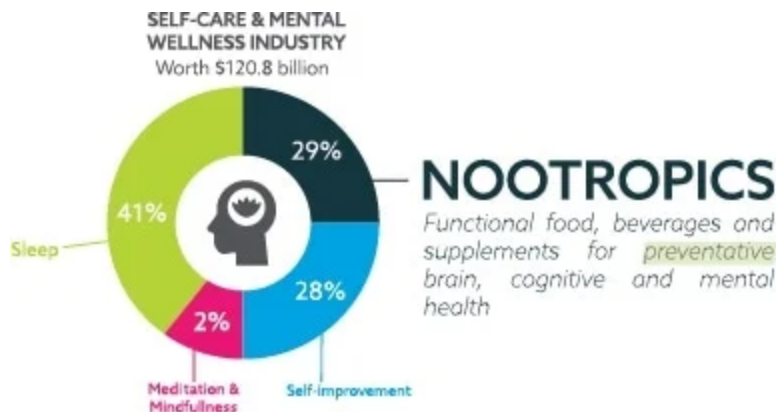


Image Credit: Atlantia Clinical Trials

The pandemic has also accelerated the market growth of mental wellness optimization and overall self-care, though consumers’ strategies in this segment often vary based on demographic and psychographic factors.

Image Credit: Atlantia Clinical Trials

An increasing range of cognitive health products are available, including supplements, food, beverages, prescription drugs and Do it Yourself (DIY) packs.

Specific applications also depend on whether the product aims to prevent a condition. This report focuses on preventative brain health products:

Image Credit: Atlantia Clinical Trials

As a psychiatrist I find the alterations described in the gut microbiota in patients with depression as very significant.

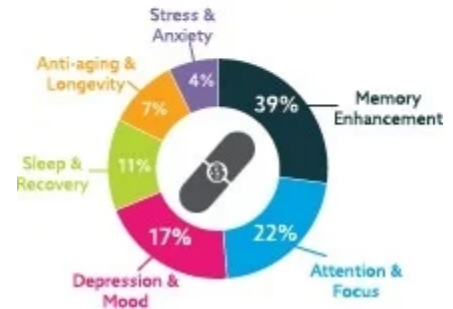
It raises novel therapeutic possibilities. Frailty in the elderly is associated with decreased microbial diversity. A major challenge for the food industry is to produce food that will increase microbial diversity and stave off frailty as people age”.

Professor Ted Dinan, Medical Director, Atlantia

Table 1. Key findings & market opportunities. Source: Atlantia Clinical Trials



US BRAIN HEALTH SUPPLEMENTS MARKET SHARE (2020)
Worth \$7.21 billion \uparrow 8%



	BEVERAGES	FOODS
Short-term Benefits	Caffeinated & herbal drinks Energy drinks	Bars Gums
Long-term Benefits	Euphorics	Superfoods

Cardiovascular Health	Weight Management	Immune Health	Cognitive Health
Innovate with products that are naturally rich in ingredients with approved health claims or "explore newer superfoods such as moringa or curcumin and invest in strong science for future health claim approvals".	A significant change in how products succeed in this market is apparent. This area is steering away from identifying specific health needs and is becoming more focused on offering a product that fits easily into consumer lifestyles.	Balancing consumer beliefs, science, and regulations is a major challenge in proactive health.	Preventative cognitive health approach. Huge focus on sleep that might [pose a threat to traditionally top performers on this category such as caffeinated products.
The fact that oats naturally contain beta glucan is a significant trend, exploited in recent years. It is however juxtapositioned with the weight loss trend of reduced or no carbohydrate diets.	Nutrition drinks: This area consistently shows higher growth compared to the other categories. Weight management – 19% of households use weight control beverages (Mintel, 2020).	Functional ingredient dosage matters – be sure to include them in amounts shown to have a benefit in scientific studies	Formats may yield functional benefits efficacy, e.g. gums tend to boost concentration by themselves, for instance they have a great innovation potential for functional ingredients aiming to tackle focus.
Omega fatty acids, plant sterols, flavols and tocopherols are key players in cardiovascular related health products. Omega 3 fatty acid is naturally sourced. Plant sterols are also linked to the natural perception. It works simultaneously with beta glucan to remove cholesterol from the body.	Meal replacement and weight loss supplements have shown similar changes throughout. This is due to consumer interest being correlative for these two categories.	Immunity, mood, cognition, weight management, and energy are top-of-mind in 2021.	The market is segmented by variables such as: aversion to risk, long terms vs short terms benefits, and lifestyle. These variables fragment the cognitive industry on the following segments: stress & anxiety, memory enhancement, attention & focus, sleep & recovery, depression & mood & anti-aging or longevity.

The role of Atlantia Clinical Trials

Atlantia Clinical Trials is a global CRO with over a decade of experience in delivering human clinical studies. Clinical results are delivered – on time and on budget – to clients around the world, thanks to the company’s leverage of the highest quality science and a cost-conscious approach to maximize a study’s value proposition.



Image Credit: Atlantia Clinical Trials

The company’s distinct business model sees it acting as both the recruitment site and study conduction site, offering clients the key benefit of working with a single organization and a single, dedicated, in-house team of experts to manage every aspect of their study.

This business model reduces a study’s cost and timeline – a core demand of almost every client.

Atlantia operates state-of-the-art clinic sites in Ireland and the USA, allowing the company to provide multicenter, multinational studies of all design types, working with a diverse array of product portfolios and market segments.

The company’s dedicated, highly qualified team remains on hand throughout the trial process, managing all aspects of a clinical project, supporting customers, and keeping them well-informed.

ATLANTIA EXPERTISE: CLINICAL ENDPOINTS

Where % is the primary endpoint

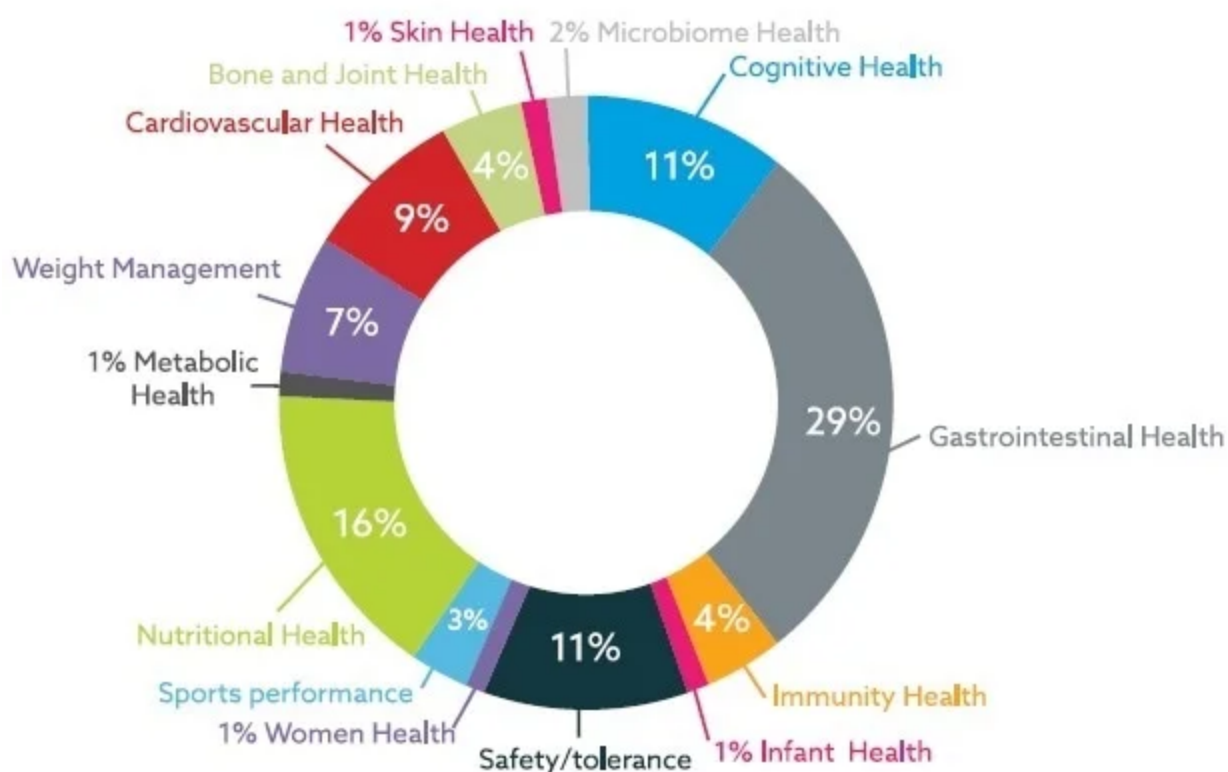


Image Credit: Atlantia Clinical Trials

Since Atlantia operates all of its own clinics, the teams working on studies are ICH-GCP certified and, therefore, can ensure that all data is of high quality and obtained in strict accordance with the protocol.

Atlantia's wide-ranging expertise sees the company working in clinical areas such as:

- Gastrointestinal function and disorder
- Healthy aging
- Physical activity and sports performance
- Nutritional investigations
- Cardiovascular health
- Metabolic syndrome
- Stress and cognitive health and decline
- Bone and joint health
- Immune function
- Microbiome dysbiosis of the vagina, gut, skin and oral cavity

Several studies have been conducted in microbiome therapeutics and other active ingredients in both healthy and patient populations: for example, LBT's, prebiotic fibers and probiotic strains.

The Chicago clinical trial unit

Atlantia's Chicago flagship clinical trial unit is based in Chicago's Magnificent Mile. This facility is owned and operated by Atlantia, with the in-house clinical research team designing studies, screening participants, conducting study visits, collecting and storing biological samples and performing all statistical analysis.

Image Credit: Atlantia Clinical Trials

Every trial activity takes place under one roof ensuring data quality, consistency and compliance across all functions.

The facility offers fifteen clinic rooms to ensure absolute privacy and confidentiality during study visits. Each room is adapted and specialized to accommodate the requirements of each specific trial while featuring all the necessary trial equipment and materials.



Image Credit: Atlantia Clinical Trials

A central phlebotomy facility enables multiple and frequent blood sample collections, with many investigations – particularly bioavailability studies – relying heavily on this unit for ongoing blood analysis. Highly trained phlebotomy staff ensure that rigorous standards are consistently met.



The facility's processing lab works with a range of sample types, including urine, fecal, hair, skin and blood. Samples are prepared for shipment to accredited testing labs, where they are then analyzed for any relevant biomarkers.

Image Credit: Atlantia Clinical Trials

Samples are stored on-site at -20 °C and -80 °C for the duration of the study and beyond, allowing further exploratory analysis as required. The facility's access- and temperature-controlled File & IP Storage unit is also wholly compliant with ICH-GCP standards.



About Atlantia Clinical Trials

Atlantia Clinical Trials Ltd is a CRO that specializes in conducting studies in foods, beverages and supplements for companies world-wide that want to scientifically validate their functional ingredients to support an: EFSA (European Food Safety Authority) Health Claim; FDA (Food & Drug Administration) Structure Function Claim; or General Product Marketing Claim.



Atlantia works with world leading scientists (among the top cited 1% internationally, in the areas of digestive health and functional foods) at the: APC Microbiome Institute in University College Cork, Ireland; Teagasc, Moorepark, Ireland and recognized centers of excellence globally.

Atlantia runs and operates its own clinic sites and conducts all studies to ICH-GCP standard (International Council for Harmonization of Technical Requirements for Pharmaceuticals for Human Use - Good Clinical Practice). Its team includes physician experts in digestive health, mental health (psychological stress and cognition), cardiovascular health, sports performance, metabolic disease, bone health, immune health and healthy ageing. The clinical team also includes project managers, research nurses, nutritionists, certified sports trainers and lab researchers.

Atlantia manages all elements from protocol design, placebo manufacture, recruitment, and study execution, to sample and data analysis, statistics and report/dossier preparation to provide a service which is technically, scientifically and clinically superior.

The clinical studies cover a broad spectrum of functional food and beverage categories, such as dairy, cereal, probiotic, different protein forms, infant-specific foods, vitamins/minerals, plant or marine extracts and medical foods.

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