

SIBERIAN GINSENG – “King of Adaptogens”



Siberian ginseng is a natural stimulant which has been shown to increase one's capacity for hard work in a natural way without producing an unfavorable “exciting” type of effect. It also improves one's appetite, increases lean muscle, increases endurance and optimizes the use of energy at the cellular level.

It is therefore the main adaptogen responsible for improved recovery from intense physical training.

Famed as an energy tonic in China since ancient times, Siberian ginseng only gained recognition in the West in the 1950s, when a Russian scientist (I. I. Brekhman) reported its notable stress-repelling powers. Healthy men and women taking the herb were found to better endure physical strain, resist disease, and perform tests of mental sharpness.

Siberian ginseng's apparent ability to fight fatigue and alleviate myriad ailments has earned it an enthusiastic following. Many people use it the way traditional Chinese healers do--to reinforce the body's vital energy (what the Chinese call *qi*). Others take it to enhance memory and ward off colds and flu. In Russia, millions of people use the herb as a general tonic.

Siberian ginseng contains remarkable compounds that favorably affect the adrenal glands, the small glands that rest atop the kidneys and secrete stress-fighting hormones. Taking the herb is believed to boost the body's capacity to handle physical stresses ranging from heat exposure to extreme exertion. Resistance to disease increases as well. So does one's overall energy level.

In Chinese medicine, it is valued for its beneficial effects on “qi” and its ability to treat “yang” deficiency in the spleen and kidney.

Siberian ginseng is considered to be an adaptogen, which means that it helps in stressful circumstances and also helps return the body to a normal balance. So, for example, an adaptogen might lower blood pressure in someone who has high blood pressure, but raise it in another person who has low blood pressure. The active ingredients in Siberian ginseng, eleutherosides, are thought to increase stamina and to stimulate the immune system.

Until recently, most scientific research on Siberian ginseng took place in Russia. This research has largely supported its use to maintain health and strengthen the system rather than to treat particular disorders. Siberian ginseng may help the body deal with physically and mentally stressful exposures such as heat, cold, physical exhaustion, viruses, bacteria, chemicals, extreme working conditions, noise, and pollution. By strengthening the system, it may also help prevent illness.