

# Ginseng

**COMMON NAME:** Ginseng

**SCIENTIFIC NAME:** The *Panax* family consists of at least nine species, including *Panax quinquefolium* (xi yang shen, American ginseng), *Panax notoginseng* (sanqi, Chinese ginseng), *Panax ginseng* (Korean red ginseng), and *Panax japonicus* (Japanese ginseng).

## NOT RECOMMENDED - EVIDENCE

### LEVELS OF EVIDENCE



**Recommended:**

Several well-designed studies in humans have shown positive benefit. Our team is confident about its therapeutic potential.



**Recommended with Caution:**

Preliminary studies suggest some benefit. Future trials are needed before we can make a stronger recommendation.



**Not Recommended - Evidence:**

Our team does not recommend this product because clinical trials to date suggest little or no benefit.



**Not Recommended – High Risk:**

Our team recommends against using this product because clinical trials to date suggest substantial risk greater than the benefit.

### Evaluated Benefits

No evidence of efficacy or not indicated

## Source

The herb is harvested when the ginseng is six years old; it is steamed or heated and subsequently dried, resulting in an increase in saponin content.

## Indications/Population

Hyperlipidemia

## Mechanism of Action

Active constituents with curable features found in most ginseng species include ginsenosides, polysaccharides, peptides, polyacetylenic alcohols, and fatty acids.

It has been found that red ginseng acidic polysaccharide (RGAP) treatment reduced the levels of triglyceride in both serum and the liver and increased the activity of lipoprotein lipase (LPL) in serum, indicating that RGAP may diminish the levels of triglycerides through activation of LPL.

Hepatic AMP-activated protein kinase (AMPK) is thought to play a pivotal role in regulating lipid metabolism, glucose homeostasis, and insulin sensitivity. The different Panax species and brands seem to have very different clinical effects in affecting cholesterol levels.

## Side Effects

Insomnia, diarrhea, vaginal bleeding, mastalgia, severe headache, schizophrenia, and Stevens-Johnson syndrome

## Dosing

1 gram given 3 times a day with meals

## Drug Interactions/Cautions

Ginseng (some varieties or brands of ginseng) interacts with many prescription drugs, including anti-coagulants and those metabolized through the cytochrome P450 systems.

## References

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