

C O R D Y C E P S

Cordyceps for World Records

Athletes looking for a supplement that will give them an edge over their competitors have experimented with everything from amino acids to steroids in their quest to be the best.

Chinese athletes have begun using cordyceps supplements to improve their speed and power, and the results are hard to ignore—these athletes are breaking world records and leaving their competitors in the dust. At the Stuttgart World Championships last August, Chinese women runners took gold medals for the 1,500-, 3,000-, and 10,000-meter events. At the Seventh Chinese National Games the following month in Beijing, these women broke three world records, including cutting 42 seconds off the previous world record for the 10,000 meter race.

All drug tests administered to the record-breaking Chinese track team proved negative, and the International Amateur Athletic Federation ratified the new world records.

The coach of these amazing athletes expects his runners' performance to be even more spectacular at the 1996 Olympic Games in Atlanta. And the secret, he says, is **cordyceps**—a completely natural herb which is free of harmful substances.

Traditional Uses for Cordyceps

Cordyceps comes from western China, in the regions of Sichuan, Tibet, and Qinghai. It is also cultivated in Hong Kong and the Cameron Highlands in Malaysia. Because of its isolated, severe habitat, gathering the cordyceps is a difficult and expensive procedure.

The Secret Weapon of Chinese Athletes

J. Paul Anderson

Cordyceps is gaining fresh attention since the Chinese track coach revealed his athletes' secret supplement.

Cordyceps has long been a mainstay of traditional Chinese herbal medicine. For over 5,000 years it has been used to provide energy, improve health, and treat so many ailments that it has been classified as a "life extender". Unlike some Chinese herbs meant for only men or only women, cordyceps can be taken by both sexes.

Cordyceps is used as a rejuvenator, to increase energy levels and help people with hectic lifestyles. It is known as a remedy for weakness and fatigue, and is sometimes taken as a aphrodisiac or a cure for impotence. Often cordyceps is combined with ginseng and royal jelly to make a "vigor and vitality" tonic.

In China it is often prescribed for the elderly to ease general aches and pains since it is thought to strengthen bone marrow and skeletal muscles. Chinese Physicians also use cordyceps to strengthen resistance to infections, treat colds, and nourish the kidneys and lungs.

Cordyceps is used to ease a wide range of respiratory ailments. It is prescribed to reduce cough and phlegm, shortness of breath, bronchial discomfort, childhood asthma, and blood-tinged sputum.

Traditional Asian herbal medicines are becoming increasingly popular, and they have attracted a following among people in search of natural health tonics. Cordyceps is gaining fresh attention since the Chinese track coach revealed his athletes' secret supplement; its popularity extends even to Western countries.

Western medical scientists have now become interested in Cordyceps. Currently researchers are investigating its use as an immunopotentiating agent in treating cancer and immunodeficiency.