

Cordyceps Sinensis

Channels entered: Lung, Kidney

Text in which first appeared: Thoroughly Revised Materia Medica

Functions and clinical use:

* Nourishes the Lungs and fortifies the Kidneys: used for cough, night sweats, impotence, spermatorrhea, and weakness during recovery from a severe illness. Because it tonifies both the Yin and Yang and is a very safe substance, it can be taken over a long period of time.

* Nourishes the Lung Yin: used for cough, wheezing, and coughing up blood. It is especially useful for chronic Consumption.

Major combinations:

* With duck, chicken, pork, or fish as a stew for weakness, dizziness, spontaneous sweating, and other symptoms of debility and lowered resistance from a weakened Protective Qi.

* With Cortex Eucommiac Ulmoidis (Du Zhong), Herba Epimedii (Yin Yang Hua), and Herba Cistanches (Rou Cong Rong) for such symptoms as impotence, sore and weak lower back and lower extremities, and spermatorrhea associated with Deficient Kidney Yang.

* With Semen Pruni Armeniacae (Xing Ren), Bulbus Fritillariae Cirrhosae (Chuan Bei Mu), and Gelatinum Asini (E Jiao) for such symptoms as cough, wheezing, coughing up blood, and chest pain from Deficient Lung Yin.

Cautions and contradictions:

* Use cautiously in Exterior conditions.

* See Toxicity below.

Dosage: 1 S-4 qian

Major known ingredients: cordycepic acid, cordycepin, vitamin B₁₂

Pharmacological and clinical research:

* Antibiotic effect: very dilute solutions of Cordyceps Sinensis (Dong Chong Xia Cao) have an in & inhibitory effect against some of the tuberculosis bacilli. Preliminary studies also show an inhibitory effect in vitro on Streptococcus pneumoniae.

* Effect on muscle: water extractions of Cordyceps Sinensis (Dong Chong Xia Cao) inhibit the contraction of smooth and cardiac muscle in many animal experiments. This herb causes bronchodilation of guinea pig lung specimens, inhibits contraction of intestinal and uterine specimens from rabbits, and inhibits heart specimens and in situ heart tissue from frogs.

B. Physiological activities:

In recent studies, Cordycepin GP has shown to possess the following physiological activities:

1. Influence on Energy Metabolism:

Animal studies in rats have shown that Cordycepin GP stimulates the glycolysis of erythrocytes leading to the increased formation of ATP, enhances liver functions and CPK activities in muscular cells in the conversion of ADP to ATP using CP as the phosphate donor **[1]**.

2. Influence on Endocrine Functions:

Androgenic activities have been demonstrated in Cordycepin GP. This preparation has been shown in clinical trials by Chinese researchers to have restorative effects in impaired sexual functions as a result of hormonal imbalance [2].

3. Influence on Immune Functions:

In cellular studies, researchers have observed that Cordycepin GP increased the production of macrophages as well as natural killer lymphocytes probably via the increased synthesis of RNA in the spleen cells [3].

4. Anti-senile Activities:

In animal studies, researchers have observed that Cordycepin GP increases the activities of Superoxide Dismutase (SOD) in liver tissue, inhibit the formation of superoxide in membrane lipids and enhances the activities of cerebral monamine oxidase both in rats & mice [4,5].

C. Therapeutic Applications:

Cordycepin GP is intended to be used as a supertonic for anti-aging, for sustenance of general good health as well as the improvement of athletic performance. For the past several decades, however, it has been sought after in China as an excellent nutraceutical for its unusual therapeutic application in the prevention and relief of the following conditions: Impaired sexual & liver functions, hypertension, hypercholesterolemia, hyperglyceridemia, hypothyroidism, asthma, chronic bronchitis as well as infectious hepatitis.

Nevertheless, the above information should be used for internal reference only and under no circumstances should it be construed as medical claims.

D. Dosage:

For general health:	2 to 3 grams once daily
For athletes:	2 to 3 grams twice daily
For the weak & sick	2 to 3 grams thrice daily

E. Reference:

- [1] Cheng et al (1992): 15 (3), 63, J. Of Beijing Academy of Chinese medicine
- [2] Wang et al (1990): 13(6), 42, Guanxi Chinese Pharmacology
- [3] Cheng et al (1987): 7 (1), 6, J. Of Pharma. Analytica
- [4] Liu et al (1991): 16 (4), 240, J. Of Chinese Pharmacology
- [5] Hui et al (1988): 1 (48) Shanghai Chinese Pharmacology