

# Ginseng-- The Oriental Wonder Drug

Dr. RAJESH VISHWANATHAN



**G**inseng is a famous Chinese herb and has been in use in that country for over 7,000 years. It is also found in Russia, North Korea, Japan, and many parts of the U.S, Siberia and Eastern Canada.

The roots are called Jin-chen, meaning 'like a man.' In Chinese medicine; it is used to combat stress and as a restorative agent. It is also used to treat nervous disorders, anemia, angina, fatigue and endocrine system disorders as it has immune stimulant properties.

### Pharmacological Properties

According to chemical analysis, ginseng contains 30 glycosides, some of which are called Ginsenosides. It also contains Vitamin B and C trace minerals.

Red Ginseng contains maltol, which has an anti-oxidant property and prevents strokes and heart attacks. As maltol activity is inhibited by iron, ginseng roots are never boiled in iron pots.

Ginseng has been found to improve muscular function, work capacity, help in combating stress and increase alertness and psychomotor skills.

Ginseng is useful in Diabetes Mellitus. In rats it has been shown to prevent radiation-induced diseases, as it has anti-cancerous properties. It reduces cholesterol and clot formation. It has been found useful in gout and reduces the serum uric acid levels and thus alleviates the pain in the joints.

Ginseng is also useful in age-related nervous disorders; sleep disorders, memory loss and confusion. It is also thought that this herb can slow down aging.

Objective scientific research on the properties of the active elements of ginseng has supported traditional claims that it is useful in invigorating, rejuvenating and increasing longevity of the person.

**Dr. Rajesh Vishwanathan (drrajesh.vishwanathan@gmail.com)**