

Astragalus (Astragalus membranaceus)

Written by Administrator
Thursday, 19 May 2011 05:29 -

Strengthens digestion, raises metabolism, strengthens the immune system, and promotes the healing of wounds and injuries. It treats chronic weakness of the lungs with shortness of breath, collapse of energy, prolapse of internal organs, spontaneous sweating, chronic lesions, and deficiency edema. It is very effective in cases of nephritis that do not respond to diuretics.

In China astragalus enjoyed a long history of use in traditional medicine to strengthen the Wei Ch'i or "defensive energy" or as we call it, the immune system. Regarded as a potent tonic for increasing energy levels and stimulating the immune system, astragalus has also been employed effectively as a diuretic, a vasodilator and as a treatment for respiratory infections.

Antibacterial; used with the ginsengs; helpful for young adults for energy production and respiratory endurance; warming energy; helpful for hypoglycemia; used for "outer energy" as ginseng is used for "inner energy"; American Cancer Society publication reports it restored immune functions in 90% of the cancer patients studied; use to bolster the white blood cell count; strengthens the body's resistance; use for debilitating conditions; helps to promote the effects of other herbs; helps to improve digestion. Astragalus is of the most popular herbs used in the Orient; the Chinese name for astragalus is Huang Ch'i. It is a tonic producing warm energy and specifically tonifying for the lungs, spleen, and triple warmer via meridians.

In studies performed at the Nation Cancer Institute and 5 other leading American Cancer Institutes over the past 10 years, it has been positively shown that astragalus strengthens a cancer patient's immune system. Researchers believed on the basis of cell studies that astragalus augments those white blood cells that fight disease and removes some to those that make the body more vulnerable to it. There is clinical evidence that cancer patients given astragalus during chemotherapy and radiation, both of which reduce the body's natural immunity while attacking the cancer, recover significantly faster and live longer. It is evident that

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astragalus does not directly attack cancers themselves, but instead strengthens the body's immune system. In these same studies, both in the laboratory and with 572 patients, it also has been found that Astragalus promotes adrenal cortical function, which also is critically diminished in cancer patients.

Astragalus also ameliorates bone marrow depression and gastrointestinal toxicity caused by chemotherapy and radiation. Astragalus is presently being looked upon as a possible treatment for people living with AIDS and for its potentials to prolong life.

Scientists have isolated a number of active ingredients contained in astragalus, including bioflavonoids, choline, and a polysaccharide called astragalan B. Animal studies have shown that astragalan B is effective at controlling bacterial infections, stimulating the immune system, and protecting the body against a number of toxins.

Astragalan B seems to work by binding to cholesterol on the outer membranes of viruses, destabilizing their defenses and allowing for the body's immune system to attack the weakened invader. Astragalus also increases interferon production and enhances NK and T cell function, increasing resistance to viral conditions such as hepatitis, AIDS and cancer. Astragalus shows support for peripheral vascular diseases and peripheral circulation.