

Ginseng (American, Siberian, Asian, Korean)

Latin name: *Panax ginseng* (Korean or Asian), *P. quinquefolius* (American),
Eleutherococcus senticosus (Siberian)

Family: Araliaceae

Miscellaneous:

- Though each species carries similar medicinal effects, they are distributed in different quantities based on differences of certain species.
- Asian ginseng is the most scientifically investigated of the various species.
- Supplements consist of the dried root.

Uses:

Approved via German Commission E to treat fatigue and weakness, aid to recovery from illness and degenerative conditions, and as a rehabilitative for impaired concentration and declining stamina.¹

*Duration of use should not exceed 3 months without a subsequent break of at least 2 weeks.

Mechanism:

Exact MOA is unknown. Active compounds are believed to be triterpenoid saponin glycosides (a.k.a. ginsenosides, panaxosides). There are at least 17 different variations of these active principles in the Asian species.¹

Dosage:

Dosage form should be standardized to at least 4% ginsenosides.

Tea: 3 g/cup; 1-3 times/day for 3-4 weeks

Capsules: *limited term use in young/healthy persons

= 0.5-1.0 g in two divided doses in the morning and evening on an empty stomach for 2-3 weeks followed by a 2 week, drug-free break before repeating¹

*long term use in elderly/debilitated patients

= 0.4-0.8 g/day allowed continuously for up to three months followed by a previously described break¹

Contraindications/Side effects:

Pregnancy/breastfeeding and hypertension. May increase effects of caffeine and other stimulants. High doses and long term use can cause anxiety, sleeplessness, etc. Long-term toxicity studies in humans have not been conducted to date.

Citation References:

1. Tyler, V., Robbers, J.: *Tyler's Herbs of Choice: The Therapeutic Use of Phytomedicinals*: 1999, pp. 236-239.

General References:

1. Tyler, V., Robbers, J.: *Tyler's Herbs of Choice: The Therapeutic Use of Phytomedicinals*: 1999, pp. 236-239.
2. McGuffin, M., Hobbs, C., Upton, R., Goldberg, A.: *American Herbal Products Association's Botanical Safety Handbook*: 1997, pp. 81.
3. Pierce, A., The American Pharmaceutical Association: *Practical Guide to Natural Medicines*: 1999, pp. 296-304.
4. Karch, S.: *The Consumer's Guide to Herbal Medicine*: 1999, pp. 99-101.
5. Facts And Comparisons: *Guide To Popular Natural Products*: 1999, pp. 103-104.