

A healthful treasure

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Cordyceps was used as a natural tonic to strengthen vital essence and for promoting longevity.

CORDYCEPS sinensis is the product of a parasitic fungus that infects moth caterpillars with its spores. The fungus latches onto the caterpillar then takes over it completely, killing the caterpillar in the process and mummifying it. The entire caterpillar-shaped fungus is then collected, dried and preserved for medicinal purposes.

Cordyceps has long been treasured as a precious health supplement only the Chinese royal court can afford. It was used as a natural tonic to strengthen vital essence and for promoting longevity.

Priced at RM150,000 to RM200,000 per kg, the Cordyceps sinensis root is often mistaken for a mushroom and has several nicknames, such as caterpillar fungus and Himalayan viagra.

The root also boasts a variety of health benefits, including aiding in heart disease, boosting energy levels and addressing sexual dysfunction.

Cordyceps has been used for a long time in traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) to treat a variety of ailments. Its benefits include:



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- **Anti-ageing:** The herb has anti-ageing, anti-inflammatory and antioxidant properties, which help reduce associated weakness, stress and fatigue and boosts energy during overexertion.
- **Improving heart function:** It enhances the circulation of the blood, regulates blood pressure and strengthens the heart muscles. It also aids in regulating the heart rhythm, ensuring regular blood flow by hindering the clotting of platelets. The herb also remarkably increases cardiac hypoxia tolerance.
- **Boosting respiratory, kidney and liver function:** Studies show that it can alleviate respiratory ailments such as asthma, tuberculosis and chronic bronchitis by protecting the lungs. It decreases the production of phlegm as well.

Associated with the kidney meridian, the herb strengthens the kidneys and other renal functions and also prevents excess toxins from accumulating in the body. It has a diuretic effect, preventing kidney pain.

Studies show that it helps improve and restore liver function in cases of liver damage, such as from chronic hepatitis B and C infection.

- **Enhancing physical stamina:** Awareness of this benefit was popularised by Chinese female athletes who obliterated three long-distance running world records during China's Seventh National Games in 1993. It takes care of oxygen utilisation by the cells and tissues of the body.
- **Enhances immunity:** The Cordyceps fungus increases the growth of immune cells and promotes antibody production in the body, enhancing resistance to bacterial, virus, yeast and fungal infections. It helps with post-cancer recovery too.
- **Improving sexual function:** Cordyceps helps in boosting testosterone levels in men.



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Animal experiments show that Cordyceps can stimulate mouse MA-10 cells to produce progesterone, as well as significantly increasing testosterone, resulting in increased sperm formation.

In cases of chronic inflammation, Cordyceps can help in management of symptoms due to its anti-inflammatory properties, making it invaluable as a natural solution for those suffering from inflammatory conditions.



Jan Martel PhD is a research associate at the Research and Development Centre of Chang Gung Biotechnology and the Centre for Molecular and Clinical Immunology of Chang Gung University, Taiwan.

To learn more about chronic inflammation and how you can manage it, be sure to attend a health talk on Stopping the Silent Killer: Chronic Inflammation organised by Eu Yan Sang on Oct 6 (11am) at Cititel Mid Valley, Kuala Lumpur.

The talk will be presented by Jan Martel PhD, a research associate at the Research and Development Centre of Chang Gung Biotechnology and the Centre for Molecular and Clinical Immunology of Chang Gung University, Taiwan.

*Find out more about Cordyceps for health at https://www.euyansang.com.my/en_MY/pure-extract-of-cordyceps-sinensis-mycelia-955616010421.html#q=mycelia&start=1

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