

CLINICAL USE OF GINSENG EXTRACT AS ADJUVANT IN REVITALISATION THERAPIES

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Very extensive studies carried out in the last few decades have made Ginseng—a mysterious exotic root of the past—a very useful tool in the arsenal of modern medical weaponry. For the physician who follows the old medical rule of “*primum non nocere*” (first, do not harm), it is satisfactorily proven that the use of extracts of different types of *Panax Ginseng* do not present any possibility of toxicity or addiction.⁽¹⁻⁶⁾ On the other hand there is sufficient evidence to confirm the centuries-old beliefs about its therapeutic values.⁽⁷⁻⁸⁾ Taking those two factors into consideration, we have in the last 18 months treated most of our patients with a combination of Ginseng extract with vitamins and trace elements.⁽⁹⁾

We came to this decision after the study of corresponding literature and the observation of several sporadic cases which had been treated previously.

To better understand these findings, we shall briefly explain the type of work in our “Center for the study and application of the revitalisation therapies”. The Center does not treat specific diseases but concentrates in the prevention and cure of the phenomena more and more encountered in general medical practice in all industrialized countries: premature aging. The men and women exposed to the stress of modern life, contaminated and polluted surroundings, inadequate nutrition, constant noise and nervous tension, suffer from many syndromes

undetected by physical examinations or laboratory tests. The most frequent complaints are tiredness, sleeplessness, bad digestion, loss of memory, obesity, impotence, bad temper and looks, flabby flesh and many other signs for which the physician—who too often has the same sufferings—is unable to do anything. Usually he consoles the patient by telling him that nothing wrong was found and prescribes some vitamins or tonics. With the diminished resistance, sooner or later a serious disease is bound to appear such as gastric ulcers, cardiovascular troubles or a nervous breakdown, all of which were far less frequent in the past, as well as now among the primitive tribes spared from industrialized civilization.

Our approach to these problems is an endeavour to increase the resistance⁽¹³⁾ and stimulate the deficient function of the individual through multi-therapeutical treatments. Knowing perfectly well that there is not a miraculous pill or injection for all of the above-mentioned troubles, we first try to eliminate the existence of a specific disease which, if present, is treated by orthodox methods or referred to adequate specialists. When no such illness is found we try to trace the impaired malfunction taking into consideration the very frequent psychosomatic factors.

Nutrition is studied carefully, especially in the cases of obesity, asthenia, hypoglycemia or borderline diabetic cases. Whenever medication is neces-

sary, we favour the use of natural medications because we consider that the use of powerful synthetic drugs should be limited to carefully selected diseases where no other approach is possible. When *natural extracts are used, we prefer the use of the complete extract to the isolated active ingredient, considering that the complete extracts contain elements which symbiotic action may be very valuable.*

During their stay at the Center (7 to 14 days) the patients undergo apart from the initial check-up several tests to evaluate their physical and mental capacities.* Those tests are important for the latter evaluation of the achieved results. Our experience shows that it is impossible to determine the value of improvements on the patients' subjective findings only.

It is in the follow-up period that we include the Ginseng in treatments which are carried on for one month giving twice a day one capsule containing 200 mg. of a concentrated extract combined with vitamins and trace elements⁽¹¹⁾ for ten days, followed by one capsule daily. Afterwards we advise our patients to take sporadically one capsule when exposed to an unusual stress.

We have treated in this manner 214 cases, all of them being followed up from 6 to 18 months. It is difficult to appreciate the pure effect of the Ginseng treatment as all patients have been exposed simultaneously to other therapies and dietetic regimens and have benefited from the vacation type relaxation associated with the excellent climatic conditions of the Bahamas.

The evaluation of the Ginseng contribution can only be made by comparing those results with the results achieved by similar cases treated without Ginseng. We know that a precise evaluation of the results is impossible but we have found the main effects are similar to those which have been described in other studies connected with the clinical use of Ginseng extract. We believe that the use of the Ginseng extract reduces the time that it takes for the favourable effects of other treatments to appear. For instance, with the Niehans type cell-therapy,⁽¹¹⁾ the usual 12 to 14 weeks period is reduced to 8 to 10 weeks. Although the observation time is still too short to draw conclusions, we have the impression

that the time of the effectiveness of biological treatments is being prolonged.

In 40 cases of patients suffering from neurotic and psychotic depressive tendencies as well as endogenous depression, all of whom had to take anti-depressants prior to our treatment in 26 cases the anti-depressants could be completely withdrawn and in all the rest the dosage substantially diminished. Without Ginseng withdrawal of anti-depressants is difficult and never reached or even exceeded 50%.

Both high and low blood pressure are favourably influenced by revitalisation therapies. The improvement time is shortened by the addition of Ginseng and the effect is especially remarkable in hypotension.

The only field where no improvement has been registered is obesity. The pattern of loss of weight in 40 overweight patients who had Ginseng was very similar to the pattern found with patients without Ginseng.

Impressive results have been noted in 27 cases of male secondary impotence.⁽¹⁰⁾ Complete recovery was achieved in 15 cases, partial improvement in 9, the 3 remaining were referred to psychiatric treatment 2 of which succeeded. As we believe that this syndrome is in the majority of cases a psychological manifestation, we think that the action of Ginseng is not of an aphrodisiac nature but the general feeling of well-being of the patient contributes to the disappearance of the syndrome. To confirm this supposition we gave placebo capsules to patients who complained of not achieving an erection unless taking Ginseng. Without exception the placebo worked. This confirmed the theory that "fear of performance" is the major factor in most cases of impotence.

The partial loss of memory present in most treated cases start improving usually after one week of Ginseng treatment while the revitalisation therapies alone do not show improvement for about a month.

The evaluation of any changes in the unusual type of tiredness is very difficult as one has to rely on subjective observations. It is even more difficult to study the synergetic effect where no comparison can be established. However, we have tried to deter-

mine it by calculating the time of mental and physical recovery in the morning and the appearance and frequency of the afternoon tiredness. There again our impression is that with the introduction of the Ginseng and the beneficial effects of the treatment have been faster.

Usually we repeat the same Ginseng treatment six months after the first one has been administered.

The following two cases illustrate the possibility of the immediate favourable effect of Ginseng administered sporadically after the biological as well as Ginseng treatments:-

Case no. 87, male, 37 years old, professional concert pianist, has been heavily exposed to different types of drugs as well as alcoholic intoxication. When admitted, he complained of unusual fatigue, lack of concentration, loss of memory, insomnia and complete secondary impotence. Seen four months after receiving the treatments he claims that all the afore-mentioned troubles have completely disappeared. He also claims when taking a Ginseng capsule one hour before a concert he has the impression that his artistic performance is improved. He states that the applaudimeter registration confirms very substantially these observations. (Applaudimeter method is used in the theaters to measure the enthusiasm of the public by evaluating the intensity and duration of the applause). Two boxes of identical-looking capsules, one containing Ginseng and the other placebo, were given to his wife and without being told what they were she was asked to alternate the boxes and register the corresponding applaudimeter findings. When seen six months later and the results compared, we have found that the average reaction of the public was 12% higher the days when he did have the Ginseng. He has had the Ginseng 8 times and placebo 8 times. On one occasion he had Ginseng, after being subjected to a heavy alcoholic intoxication the day before. The hangover seriously influenced his performance and the reaction of the public was clear as this day the applaudimeter registered his lowest reading. Ginseng could not counteract the effects of the hangover. In this particular case the revitalisation therapies and the Ginseng treatment have helped the detoxification of the patient and he has in the last 4

months completely abstained from alcohol and smokes marijuana only occasionally.

Case no. 120, male, 60 years old, dramatic actor, in very good physical condition and leading a very normal life with adequate nutrition. This patient complained of excessive tiredness which jeopardized not only his own play but also the performance of the company as he usually had leading parts. After having received the revitalisation therapies and the follow up including Ginseng, his performances improved substantially and when seen six months afterwards he insisted on the favourable action of a Ginseng capsule taken one hour before the performance. Like case no. 87, he mentioned the applaudimeter which, according to him, showed lower readings when he did not take it. In this case we gave him differently marked envelopes only half of which contained Ginseng. He kept a book on which day he took which type of capsule and marked the registration of the applaudimeter. After a month of daily performances it was interesting to see that, according to his bookkeeping, the applaudimeter registered on the average 17% higher on the days when he had taken Ginseng.

In our opinion these two cases can be considered as double blind test where the evaluation is based on objective measurements.

We consider that the abundant information and studies which have been done with Ginseng⁽¹⁶⁾ justifies its use in the general medical practise. In our experience, we have discovered Ginseng to be a valuable help as a synergetic agent with our biological revitalisation program and we are sure that there are other fields, especially in the biological trend, where Ginseng will show a beneficial action. But a careful selection especially with synthetic medication used at the same time should be done. Recently Ginseng was administered combined with Phenylbutazone which later was not even listed in the product.⁽¹⁷⁾ This has provoked several cases of Agranulocytosis which probably could have occurred with Phenylbutazone alone but possibly could have been increased through assumed activation from Ginseng.

Unfavourable publicity was drawn to Ginseng although alone or combined with adequate other elements, no accident has ever happened.

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- *E.K.G.—Electro-Cardio-Gram.
 F.V.C.—Forced Vital Capacity.
 O.I.T.—Organic Integrity Test.
 FIRO-B—Fundamental Interpersonal Relations Orientation—Behavior.
 C.P.I.—California Psychological Inventory
 or M.M.P.I.—Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory.
 C.I.—Cornell Index No. 2.—For evaluation of Neuropsychiatric and Psychosomatic Symptoms.
 W.M.S.—Wechsler Memory Scale.
 R.T.—Visual Choice Reaction Time.
 Audiogram—Hearing Test.
 Vibrometer Level—Sensitivity Test to Electricity.
 Colour-Word Test—Evaluation of Mental Brain Damage.
 Digit Symbol—Wechsler Audit Intelligence Scale.
 Exercise Trips—Increase of Heart Beat.