

# Can korean red ginseng increase the life span of cancer patients?

[Health & Medicine](#), [Cancer](#)



According to the newspaper article, it claims that Korean red ginseng is capable of increasing the life spans of cancer patients. However, it seems that no concrete evidence is present as yet to substantiate this claim since “ nobody knows the results”. The article mentioned that Korean red ginseng has played a vital role in extending French politician, Francois Mitterrand’s life from three months to more than half a year. Professor Kim Si-kwan at Konkuk University further supports this statement as he mentioned, “ red Korean ginseng reduces the amount of reactive oxygen species (ROS) in the body”.

Similarly, Professor Park Jeong-hill at Seoul National University also supported the statement as he said, “ it is crucial to deter ROS to prevent or deal with cancer”. According to my online research, ROS are chemically reactive molecules that contain oxygen and they are able to cause harm to cell structures. Particularly, oxidative DNA damage can arise from mitochondria mutation and therefore, leading to cancer (Frei, 1997). Besides that, Korean Ginseng Corporation has stated that Korean red ginseng contains anti-carcinogenic that aids in limiting or slowing down the spread of cancer cell growth.

Hence, I feel that it is a sound claim that Korean red ginseng is able to deter cancer cell growth since Korean Ginseng Corporation has stated its stand to support the article’s claim in their company website. Korean Ginseng Corporation has over a hundred year of legacy worldwide and its ginseng is available in the international markets as well, hence it is very likely that the statement from its company website is trustworthy and accurate. Therefore,

this makes it a reliable piece of evidence to a certain extent and I can trust its contents.

Moreover, Korean Ginseng Corporation has also carried out several experiments to substantiate the fact that Korean red ginseng is able to bring about longer life ps. For instance, a control group of men and women were made to consume Korean red ginseng for a given period of time and compared to those who did not consume it. Results showed that those who consumed the Korean red ginseng lived a longer life than those who did not (Please refer to Appendix 1). As a result, I feel that this piece of evidence is sufficient to support the article's claim and I can accept its stand.

Adding on, the consumption of Korean red ginseng is able to help decrease incidence of cancer according to Korean Ginseng Corporation (Please refer to Appendix 2). Thus, I trust the article's claim to an extent. However, I feel that the evidence from the article is unreliable to a certain extent. From the article, it is said that Mitterrand's life p had increased to more than twice because he consumed Korean red ginseng. A possible reasoning that he lived longer than expected could be due to the inaccurate prediction from hisdoctor, rather than the effects of Korean red ginseng alone.

From my online research, it is common that doctors are " poor at predicting life p, even when they're dealing with the terminally ill" patients (Schumann, 2010). Thus, I feel that it is not accurate evidence to support the article's claim and I am unable to accept it. Furthermore, the article states " one of the most bought items by visiting Chinese tourists to Korea is red ginseng". This statement is vague and I feel that it does not imply that the consumers

bought the Korean red ginseng out of pure belief that it can prevent cancer, or rather to increase their life p.

There is a possibility that the consumers bought the Korean red ginseng because of the effects of “ word of mouth”, which means that they buy the ginseng simply because everybody else had bought it. It is similar to a chain effect. As such, I feel that this evidence from the article is insufficient and I am unable to accept that it can support the article’s claim. Moreover, the extension of life p of cancer patients can be attributed to many other external factors rather than just the consumption of Korean red ginseng alone.

For instance, studies have shown that by maintaining an optimistic attitude can help lengthen life p too (Wells, 2012). A Yale University researchers statement further supports this statement that: Positive self-perceptions can prolong life expectancy (Lovette, 2012). Hence, this shows that the claim is unreliable to a certain extent since it failed to recognize other factors that contribute to the increase of life p. In conclusion, I agree with the claim made by the article after weighing both sides of it. It is no doubt that Korean red ginseng is able to bring about goodhealthif consumed long term.

However, I feel that the use of Korean red ginseng to overcome cancer cannot be regarded as a single remedy on its own. It must be coupled with other external factors such as healthy lifestyle, optimisticenvironmentand attitude in order to maximize the positive effects. According to Korean Ginseng Corporation, long-term consumption of it can help fight insomnia, anti-ageing, increase concentration, stamina, improve memory function and

many more. Frei. B. (1997). Reactive Oxygen Species and Antioxidant Vitamins. Taken from <http://lpi.oregonstate.edu/f-w97/reactive.html> Korean Ginseng Corporation.

Taken from <http://www.kgcus.com/Studies.html> Lovett. S. (2012). 10 Practical steps to a more optimistic attitude- in just 30 days Taken from <http://australianriverrestorationcentre.com.au/2012/05/> Schumann. J. H. (2010). The Worst Fortune Tellers. Why doctors are so bad at predicting how long their patients will live. Taken from [http://www.slate.com/articles/health\\_and\\_science/medical\\_examiner/2010/08/the\\_worst\\_fortune\\_tellers.html](http://www.slate.com/articles/health_and_science/medical_examiner/2010/08/the_worst_fortune_tellers.html) Wells. J. (2012). Optimistic People Live Longer Taken from <http://www.familyhealthguide.co.uk/10-tips-for-a-longer-happier-life.html>