

Help for the Chronically Fatigued - New Research Suggest the Little Known Herb Jiaogulan (Gynostemma) May Provide Some Answers

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This January, researchers from Huangshan University in China reported the results of a new study into the effects of the herb Jiaogulan (*Gynostemma pentaphyllum*) on endurance. This study is raising eyebrows in the medical community for the potential benefits for helping relieve chronic fatigue.

The National Health Organization estimates that as many 1 million Americans suffer from Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (CFS). Symptoms of CFS include malaise after exertion, unrefreshing sleep, widespread muscle and joint pain, sore throat, headaches of a type not previously experienced, cognitive difficulties, chronic and severe mental and physical exhaustion, and other characteristic symptoms in a previously healthy and active person. The diagnoses of CFS remains controversial as experts disagree about root causes and accurate diagnoses. However, for the sufferers of this debilitating condition, any sign of relief is welcome news.

The scientists treated mice for 28 days with jiaogulan extract. Different test groups were given varying amounts and a control group was just given distilled water. After the 28 days the researchers strap small weights on the mice and timed how long the mice can swim. By the way, no mice were harmed in this study. They swim as long as they can and then the scientists take them out and time how long it takes for them to recover.

The researchers found that the test subjects swam longer and recovered more quickly when they were given jiaogulan. The scientists also did blood tests to check the build up of toxins normally induced by rigorous exercise including lactic acid (the stuff that makes muscle sore after a work out), BUN (a measure of how well your kidneys and liver are eliminating waste) and triglycerides (fat in the blood). They found that the mice receiving jiaogulan had lower levels of all three. The jiaogulan treated mice also had higher levels of muscle glycogen indicating that the mice consuming jiaogulan had more "energy reserves".

All this sums up to encouraging (although certainly not definitive) news for, not only endurance athletes and

gym rats, but also for the average person suffering from fatigue. Polysaccharides in Jiaogulan seem to have a positive effect on endurance and on muscle recovery.

A spokesperson for the leading seller of jiaogulan products in the United States, Immortalitea, said, "Our sales of jiaogulan to endurance athletes have been strong for years. It's heartening to see new research that suggest those results may be applicable to CFS sufferers as well." Jiaogulan is available as tea or supplement here; <http://www.immortalitea.com/store/p/27-Premium-Jiaogulan-Gynostemma-Tea.aspx>

Quoting from the published study results, "Recent studies have proved that the polysaccharides from Gynostemma pentaphyllum (aka jiaogulan) have anti-oxidant, anti-aging, anti-cancer and immunoregulatory activities." Add to those benefits, greater endurance and much needed relief for the chronically fatigued and jiaogulan sounds like one herb that will be getting more attention from researchers and consumers.

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