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The effects of ginseng and tribulus terrestris on athlete's physical performance

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The use of dietary supplements is widespread among most of athletes. Herbs are used to improve performance, recovery time, health maintenance during intense periods of exercise, muscle mass build up and fat mass reduction. The two most common herbs which are used to improve physical performance in athletes, are tribulus terrestris (TT) and ginseng. Scientific researches have suggested that these improvements may affect muscular strength, maximum oxygen uptake, heart rate and exercise capacity. The aim of this review study was to determine the effects of ginseng and TT extract on athlete's performance. Ginseng extract is the most studied herb because of its effect on physical performance. Exercise is considered as a form of stress, and ginseng may be effective because of its adaptogenic characteristics to normalize the body function affected by the stress. Ginseng helps to restore energy, increases the production of cortisol and stimulates the anabolic reactions in the body. It may improve the physical performance because of the production of nitric oxide in immune and cardio-vascular system cells. Beside ginseng, TT extract has been shown to elevate the circulating amount of testosterone and luteinizing hormone. Furthermore, it may enhance the physical power, energy production, anaerobic lactic muscular power and lactic glycolytic power. The studies have suggested that TT extract increases the creatin kinase concentration and decreases the level of creatinine in athlete's blood. The results have shown that the ginseng and TT extract may play beneficial roles in athlete's physical performance improvement, specially during regular consumption.

Biography

Kimia Moiniafshari has received her BSc degree in nutrition field from Shahid Beheshti university of medical science and is MSc student in sport nutrition field. She is nutrition and autism researcher and her BSc thesis was about management of nutritional strategies for preventing and controlling of autism and has some publications in this area and now is working on athlete's metabolism and effective supplements for improving their exercise performance.

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