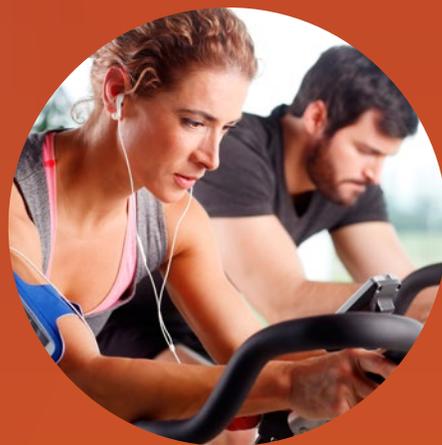




The Ashwagandha Difference

How This Powerful Herb Can
Enhance Your Health



LifeExtension[®]
Stay Healthy, Live Better



Discovering India's Exotic Herb

You may have heard people talking about ashwagandha. But what is it exactly, where does it come from — and why are so many people excited about it? Find out here!



The Stress-Relieving Powers of Ashwagandha

Stress is everywhere in today's busy world, and it's affecting our health. Could a remedy that's been used for thousands of years be the answer? The latest research looks encouraging!



Ashwagandha's Amazing Brain Benefits

Find out what scientists are discovering about ashwagandha's remarkable ability to protect our brain cells — and why they think it might offer a promising treatment for degenerative diseases such as Alzheimer's!



Boosting Fitness Levels with Ashwagandha

Does your exercise routine need a little help? Whether you're an athlete, a weekend warrior, or an exercise novice, ashwagandha can add a little boost to your workout!



#1

**Discovering India's
Exotic Herb**



Discovering India's Exotic Herb

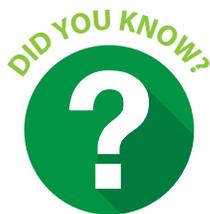
You may have heard about ashwagandha, or maybe you've heard it referred to as Indian ginseng, winter cherry, or its scientific name *Withania somnifera*. But no matter what it's called, one thing is certain — more and more people are starting to discover this remarkable herb and its wide range of benefits!

Native to the dry regions of India, northern Africa, and the Middle East, ashwagandha has been used for centuries as one of the most powerful and important herbs in Ayurvedic healing, a form of medicine based on the Indian principles of natural healing.

Over the years, people have taken ashwagandha for an amazing array of uses, including reducing stress and anxiety, improving brain function, decreasing inflammation, lowering blood sugar and high cholesterol, increasing muscle mass and strength, boosting testosterone and male fertility, providing relief from arthritis and backaches, and much more.

The scientific evidence on all of these benefits is not yet complete. But while much more research needs to be done, the studies so far have been promising. In this book, we're going to focus our attention on three potential uses for ashwagandha: relieving stress, protecting the brain, and boosting fitness levels.

Source: WebMD



In Sanskrit, ashwagandha means “the smell of a horse.” And indeed, the root is said to have a strong, horse-like aroma. But don't worry — you won't smell like a horse if you take it!



#2

**The Stress-
Relieving Powers of
Ashwagandha**



Ashwagandha is an adaptogen, a natural herb that increases our immune function and helps the body cope with daily stress.

The Stress-Relieving Powers of Ashwagandha

In our fast-paced modern world, it often feels like stress is just a normal part of life. And indeed, it can be difficult to reduce the stress in our lives. But we CAN reduce the negative effects that stress has on our bodies and minds — and that's where ashwagandha comes in.

Users of ashwagandha have praised its stress-relieving properties for centuries, and today, the clinical research is backing them up. In fact, ashwagandha's stress-relieving properties are being found to be comparable to those of the drugs used to treat depression and anxiety, but without the many negative side effects.

Stress & Our Health

Sometimes the health effects of stress are obvious — like headaches, fatigue, and upset stomachs, to name a few. But sometimes chronic stress can have more devastating, and even deadly, effects on your health that you might not recognize until it's too late.

Cardiomyopathy is one example. This sudden and spontaneous weakening of the heart predisposes a person to arrhythmia or even sudden cardiac death. While the causes of cardiomyopathy are not fully understood yet, scientists believe that chronic stress does play a role in it.^{1,2}

Severe chronic stress can also potentially cause a condition the Japanese call Karoshi or "death from overworking." This condition was first noticed in post-World War II Japan, when severely stressed Japanese executives were suffering strokes and heart attacks at relatively young ages. Although scientists haven't yet been able to prove a direct link, their hypothesis is that these deaths were somehow connected to extreme chronic stress.

Indeed, recent studies have revealed a connection between psycho-emotional stress and the biological changes it causes. These studies showed that certain adverse life events cause epigenetic changes — potentially reversible changes in gene expression that can impact health later in life.^{3,4}

Could Ashwagandha Be the Answer?

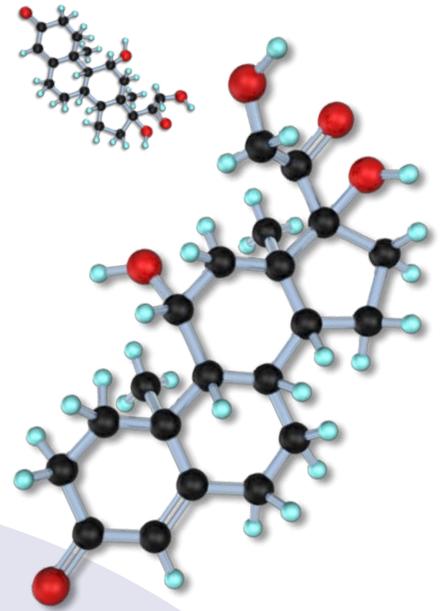
Ashwagandha is an adaptogen, a natural herb that helps the body cope with daily stress. It's been used in this way for many years, and you'll find countless success stories out there.

But it's not just anecdotal evidence. Recent research has provided solid clinical support that ashwagandha offers an effective solution for relieving stress and anxiety.

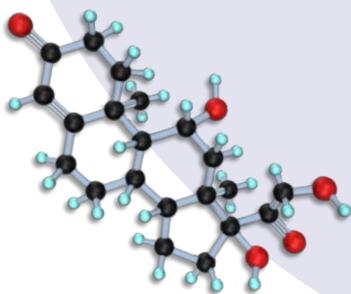
In one of the more promising studies, Indian researchers found that supplementing with 600 mg a day of ashwagandha root extract led to significantly lower levels of the stress hormone cortisol. The study followed 64 people with a history of chronic stress over a period of 60 days, with some of the subjects receiving ashwagandha and the others a placebo.

And the results were impressive! The researchers noted a 28% reduction in cortisol levels as well as significant changes in other tests, including a 44% drop in the Perceived Stress Scale, a 72% improvement in the General Health Questionnaire, and a 72% decrease on the Depression Anxiety Stress Scale.⁵

So if you're looking for a way to make healthy stress management part of your life (and really, who isn't?), try adding some ashwagandha to your health care regimen.



Like the tomato, ashwagandha is a member of the nightshade family of plants — but unlike the tomato, it's not the orange-red fruits we're interested in. It's actually the taproot that contains the most beneficial compounds.



Grow Your Own Ashwagandha

Got a green thumb? Try adding some ashwagandha to your garden! This hardy plant can be a perennial in areas with warm winters and no frost, but in other climates, you can grow it as an annual. It does best in fairly dry conditions with full or partial sunlight and sandy or rocky soil.

Step 1

In the springtime, plant your seeds in a nursery pot or medium-sized container, using potting soil with a bit of sand. Store the plant in a temperature of about 70 degrees and keep the soil consistently moist.

Step 2

The seeds should germinate within two weeks. When the seedlings are about ½ to 1 inch tall, thin them so that they are about 1 inch apart from each other.

Step 3

When the seedlings are 3 or 4 inches tall, you're ready to move your plants outdoors. Dig a small amount of sand into the soil, and leave 2 to 3 feet between plants.

Step 4

Continue watering the plants well and keeping them moist until they show strong signs of growth. After that, you can keep the plants somewhat dry.

Step 5

When fall rolls around, it's harvest time! You can dig up the plants when the flowers and berries start to form and the leaves are drying out. But dig carefully — remember, it's the roots you'll want to use.

Step 6

Wash the roots, cut them into small 2- to 3-inch pieces, and lay them out to dry. Once they're dry, you can brew them into tea or make them into an extract. And don't forget to save the berries — they can be dried and then crushed to take out the seeds so you'll be ready for next year's planting!

Source: www.Gardenguides.com



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The Stress-Relieving
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#3

Ashwagandha's
Amazing Brain
Benefits



By helping to reconstruct the networks of the nervous system, ashwagandha may one day be used to help those who suffer from brain injuries due to physical trauma, as well as those who suffer from neurodegenerative diseases such as dementia and Alzheimer's.^{7,8}

Ashwagandha's Amazing Brain Benefits

In recent years, there's been so much exciting research into how ashwagandha can benefit our brains. It turns out that not only may ashwagandha be able to protect brain cells and improve the brain's antioxidant power, but it may also prove to be a promising alternative treatment for Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, and other degenerative diseases.

Improving the Health of Brain Cells

In one animal study, scientists examined chronically stressed animals and discovered that 85% of their brain cells showed signs of degeneration — the same type of degeneration that can lead to long-term cognitive difficulties. But when animals exposed to chronic stress received ashwagandha, the amount of degenerating brain cells was lowered by 80%!⁶

Researchers in Japan have conducted extensive research on how ashwagandha can benefit the brain, and have made many exciting discoveries about ashwagandha's ability to encourage physical regrowth of the brain — discoveries which may one day help heal neurodegenerative diseases.

These studies found that an extract of ashwagandha supported significant regeneration of the axons and dendrites of nerve cells as well as the reconstruction of synapses, the junctions where nerve cells communicate with other cells. By helping to reconstruct the networks of the nervous system, ashwagandha may one day be used to help those who suffer from brain injuries due to physical trauma, as well as those who suffer from neurodegenerative diseases such as dementia and Alzheimer's.^{7,8}

Another Japanese study found that an extract of ashwagandha helped promote the growth of both normal and damaged nerve cells. This means that the herb may not only benefit diseased nerve cells, but it can also help boost healthy brain cell function.⁹

Additional research has also demonstrated ashwagandha's potential as a treatment for Parkinson's and Alzheimer's diseases. In one animal study, ashwagandha reversed Parkinson's type neurodegeneration significantly,¹⁰ while another study showed that — like current Alzheimer's drugs — ashwagandha inhibits an enzyme that is responsible for breaking down one of the brain's key chemical messengers.¹¹

Boosting the Brain's Antioxidant System

Some of the most recent data offers further proof that ashwagandha may be able to improve brain function and memory as well as protect against degenerative brain disorders. It does this by increasing the levels of a vital compound within brain cells that protects the brain against aging and damage.

This compound is called glutathione and it's a key antioxidant protector and anti-aging compound. But as we age, we may experience decreased blood flow to the hippocampus (the central area of the brain), and the reduced levels of glutathione in our brain cells leaves our brain more susceptible to damage.

However, one recent study concluded that withanolides — the compounds that are found in ashwagandha — may help to increase the levels of glutathione in our brain cells and reduce neurodegeneration.¹²

If you're looking to boost your brain power and protect yourself against neurodegenerative diseases, making ashwagandha a regular part of your daily regimen is a smart first step!



Ashwagandha is sometimes referred to as "Indian ginseng," although botanically ashwagandha and ginseng are from different plant families. But they do have one thing in common — they both have medicinally active taproots with the ability to fight stress.

Ensuring the Quality of Your Supplements



If you're like us, you always want to know what's going into the food you eat. So why should your nutritional supplements be any different?

When it comes to choosing a supplement, one of the things you definitely want to avoid is something called adulteration. Adulteration means that illegally impure or forbidden ingredients have been added or that a cheaper ingredient has been used without proper labeling.

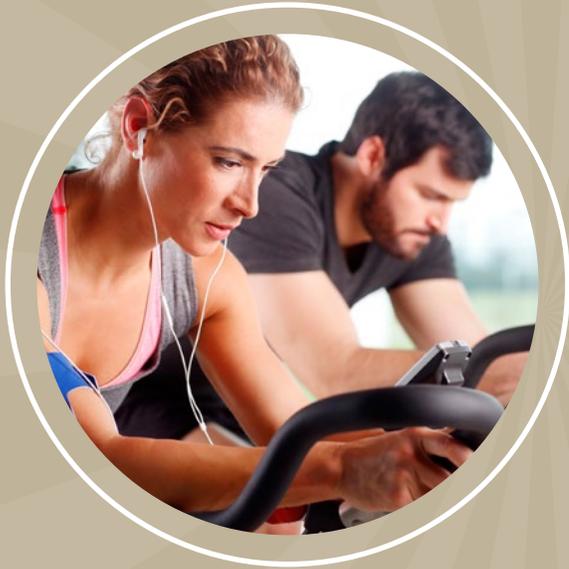
So how can you guarantee the quality, purity, and potency of the ingredients in your botanical dietary supplements? Here are a few things to consider:

Start from the Beginning. A product is only as good as its raw ingredients. Make sure that the supplement company tests the raw materials as part of their qualification testing program, and that they don't just rely on their suppliers' reports.

Ask an Expert. Companies should test the potency of standardized botanical extracts, monitor all steps of the manufacturing and fulfillment process, and follow all quality assurance and quality control procedures. But don't just take their word for it. Make sure that they are evaluated regularly by NSF International, an organization that provides independent, third-party certification programs on a variety of aspects of dietary supplement production, including certification in good manufacturing practices (GMP).

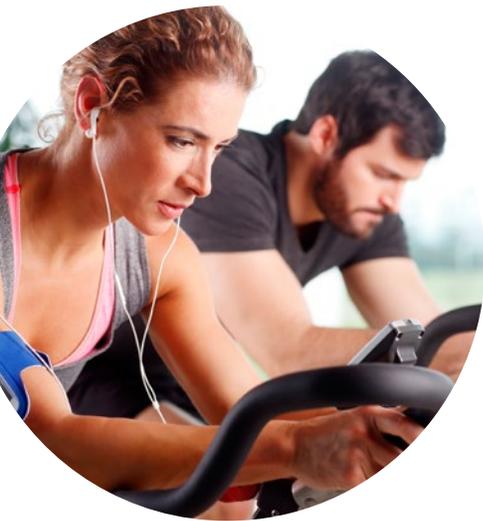
Get It in Writing. To confirm that your supplement company is using advanced technological methods to test material identity and potency, as well as the absence of contaminant, ask them for a "Certificate of Analysis," which will prove the quality of the testing along the entire process. A good supplement company won't hesitate to share this information with you.

Check the Tech. Make sure that the company uses the highest level of scrutiny in the identification of botanical ingredients. Are they using high performance thin-layer chromatography and other advanced evaluative techniques to ensure there has been no substitution or adulteration of these compounds? And are the botanical ingredients also rigorously screened for pesticides?



#4

**Boosting Fitness
Levels with
Ashwagandha**



Recent studies are demonstrating that ashwagandha can help you enhance your fitness level — whether you're looking to improve your workout performance or help your muscles recover quicker.

Boosting Fitness Levels with Ashwagandha

Recent studies are demonstrating that ashwagandha can do more than relieve stress and protect the brain — although that would be plenty! This remarkable herb can also help you enhance your fitness levels, whether you're looking to improve your workout performance or help your muscles recover quicker.

How Ashwagandha Helps

One recent study examined the effects of ashwagandha on VO₂max levels. This fancy-sounding term is simply the maximum amount of oxygen consumed while exercising. And the more oxygen that's available for your muscles, the more efficient and successful your performance will likely be.

Over a period of eight weeks, participants who were supplementing with ashwagandha showed significant improvements in VO₂max, top speed, and maximum power over those who were receiving a placebo as a control.¹³

Another study examined changes in endurance — a vital part of most sports and fitness activities — as well as quality of life when taking ashwagandha. After 12 weeks, both factors improved significantly for the participants taking ashwagandha.¹⁴



From Top Athletes to ... You!

Studies on ashwagandha and fitness have found that ashwagandha provides benefits to both serious athletes and regular gym-goers alike.

One eight-week study examined elite cyclists, some of whom were given ashwagandha. Researchers found that those taking ashwagandha had significant improvements in VO2max and time to exhaustion, while those who didn't take the herb had no improvements.¹⁵

Another study followed subjects who had little previous experience with weight training to see if those taking ashwagandha had greater success with weight training than those who didn't. So who had more significant improvements in upper and lower body strength, better muscle recovery, increase in muscle size in arms and chest, increase in testosterone, and a greater decrease in body fat percentage? You guessed it — those taking the ashwagandha!¹⁶

So whether you're training for a serious athletic competition or just getting started on a healthy exercise routine — or if you're somewhere in between — ashwagandha could help you take your workout to the next level!



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Discover the Ashwagandha Difference



Stress-Relieving Powers



Amazing Brain Benefits



Boosting Fitness Levels



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