

Ready to start planning your care? Call us at [800-525-2225](tel:800-525-2225) to make an appointment.

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Memorial Sloan Kettering  
Cancer Center

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Although Chinese asparagus has been used in traditional Chinese medicine for various conditions, human studies have not been conducted.

Derived from the root of the plant, Chinese asparagus is used in traditional Chinese medicine as a tonic, an expectorant, and to treat a variety of conditions including liver and airway inflammatory diseases.

Scientists are not sure how Chinese asparagus works, since little research has been performed on this botanical. In the lab, Chinese asparagus extracts slowed the growth of lung cancer cells and protected liver cells from toxins. Animal studies suggest it may help reduce airway inflammation. However, it is not known whether these effects could occur in the human body and additional studies are needed to evaluate its safety and effectiveness.

## What are the potential uses and benefits?

- To treat cancer  
Limited laboratory research shows some activity against isolated lung cancer cell lines. Human data are needed.
- To treat lung diseases  
Preliminary laboratory studies suggest that compounds found in Chinese asparagus may protect against airway inflammatory diseases, but no human studies have been conducted.
- To treat hepatitis  
Limited laboratory research shows a protective effect against alcohol toxicity in isolated liver cells. Human studies have not been conducted.

## What else do I need to know?

Do Not Take if:

You are taking CYP2E1 or 1A2 substrate drugs: Animal studies suggest that Chinese asparagus may affect how certain drugs are metabolized or increase the risk of side effects. Clinical relevance has yet to be determined.

If you have questions or concerns, contact your healthcare provider. A member of your care team will answer Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Outside those hours, you can leave a message or talk with another MSK provider. There is always a doctor or nurse on call. If you're not sure how to reach your healthcare provider, call 212-639-2000.

For more resources, visit [www.mskcc.org/pe](http://www.mskcc.org/pe) to search our virtual library.

Chinese Asparagus - Last updated on June 1, 2022

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