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Lab studies suggest Tian Xian has anticancer properties, but clinical trials are needed to confirm such effects.

Tian Xian is an herbal extract used in traditional medicine and consists of the following herbs: [Cordyceps sinensis](#) (Dong Chong Xia Cao), [Astragalus membranaceus](#) (Huang Qi), [Ganoderma lucidum](#) (Ling Zhi), [Panax ginseng](#) (Ren Shen), *Atractylodes macrocephalae* (Bai Zhu), *Dioscorea batatas* (Shan Yao), *Codnopsis pilosula* (Dang Shen), *Pogostemon cablin* (Huo Xiang), [Lycium barbarum](#) (Gou Qi Zi), *Pteria margaritifera* (Pearl Powder), [Ligustrum lucidum](#) (Nu Zhen Zi), and [Radix glycyrrhizae](#) (Licorice). Ingredients may vary depending on the manufacturer.

Promoters of Tian Xian claim that it has immunomodulating and anticancer effects. Lab studies suggest it can increase the number of immune cells and that it also has anticancer effects. A small study in breast cancer patients suggests that it may improve quality of life and alleviate side effects associated with chemotherapy. Larger controlled trials are needed to confirm these effects and to determine safety.

## What are the potential uses and benefits?

- Immunomodulation

A lab study showed that Tian Xian increased the number of immune cells when stimulated with specific antigens.

- Cancer treatment

Lab studies show that Tian Xian has anticancer properties. A small study in breast cancer patients suggests that it may improve quality of life and alleviate chemotherapy side effects, but larger studies are needed to confirm effects and ensure safety.

## What are the side effects?

### Case report

- Unexplained splenic cyst: In a 55-year-old breast cancer patient after receiving Tian Xian liquid.

## What else do I need to know?

### Do Not Take if:

- You have hypersensitivity to any of the constituents. See individual monographs for more on potential drug interactions: [Cordyceps](#), [Astragalus](#), [Reishi mushroom](#), [Asian ginseng](#), [Lycium](#), [Ligustrum lucidum](#), and [Licorice](#).
- You are taking CYP450 substrate drugs: Tian Xian may affect how these drugs are metabolized.
- You are receiving chemotherapy: Tian Xian may alter the effects of conventional therapies.

If you have any questions, contact a member of your care team directly. If you're a patient at MSK and you need to reach a provider after 5 p.m., during the weekend, or on a holiday, call 212-639-2000.

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

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