

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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*Smilax glabra* has not been shown to treat or prevent cancer.

*Smilax glabra* is known as Tufuling in traditional Chinese medicine. The root has been used in combination with other herbs to treat various types of infections and inflammatory conditions.

Lab studies suggest this plant has anti-inflammatory and anticancer properties. However, clinical studies have not been conducted and it is not known if the same effects would occur in humans.

## What are the potential uses and benefits?

- Arthritis  
Anti-inflammatory activity has been observed in rat models, but studies in humans are lacking.
- Infections  
Lab studies suggest *S. glabra* has antiviral activity.
- Kidney disease  
Astilbin, a compound present in *S. glabra*, has been studied in rats with diabetic nephropathy. However, clinical trials are lacking.
- Immunostimulation  
Smilaxin, a protein isolated from *S. glabra*, stimulated immune activity in mice, but studies have not been conducted in humans.
- Cancer  
Lab studies suggest antioxidant and antitumor effects, but clinical trials have not been conducted.

## What else do I need to know?

Do Not Take if:

You are taking CYP3A4 or 2D6 substrate drugs: Lab studies suggest compounds in *S. glabra* may affect the activity of drugs metabolized by these enzymes. Clinical relevance has yet to be determined.

Special Point:

*Smilax glabra* should not be confused with *Smilax officinalis*, another species commonly known as sarsaparilla.

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.

Smilax glabra - Last updated on July 12, 2022

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