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# Effects of Complementary Combination Therapy of Korean Red Ginseng and Antiviral Agents in Chronic Hepatitis B

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## Abstract

**Objectives:** Chronic hepatitis B management is commonly targeted at reducing viral replication. However, the currently available antiviral therapies are associated with some problems, including resistance and numerous adverse effects. Ginseng has been reported to be effective for treating viral infections such as influenza and human immunodeficiency virus. However, there are currently few studies on the effects of ginseng in chronic hepatitis B. Thus, this study investigated the effects of ginseng together with antiviral agents in chronic hepatitis B.

**Subjects and methods:** This was a prospective, single-blinded, randomized controlled trial, and single-center study. Thirty-eight patients were enrolled. The control group (n = 19) was administered antiviral agents alone. The experimental group (n = 19) was administered antiviral agents along with Korean Red Ginseng powder capsules (each dose is 1 gram (two capsules), a one-day dose is 3 grams). The baseline characteristics did not differ between the two groups. Differences in several non-invasive fibrosis serologic markers (type IV collagen, hyaluronic acid, transforming growth factor- $\beta$ ) and in the hepatitis B virus DNA levels were compared between the groups.

**Results:** The non-invasive fibrosis serologic markers were further decreased in the experimental group, with significant differences after treatment observed for hyaluronic acid ( $p = 0.032$ ) and transforming growth factor- $\beta$  ( $p = 0.008$ ), but not for type IV collagen ( $p = 0.174$ ).

**Conclusions:** This study suggests the possibility of Korean Red Ginseng as a complementary therapy for chronic hepatitis B.

**Keywords:** Korean red ginseng; chronic hepatitis B; hepatic fibrosis.

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