

## STUDY ON DECOCTIONS FOR SUPPORTING VITAL QI (ZHENG QI) AND INVIGORATING THE BLOOD

Xia et al. conducted a comparative study on the effect of decoctions for invigorating the Blood and decoctions for supporting Vital Qi (Zheng Qi) and invigorating the Blood when combined with radiotherapy for nasopharyngeal cancer. 11

*Groups:* 98 patients recently hospitalized for nasopharyngeal cancer were randomly divided into three groups according to the date of admission. All three groups were given routine radiotherapy during the period of treatment. In addition, group II (33 patients) was given supplementary treatment with a herbal decoction for invigorating the Blood, and group III (34 patients) was given supplementary treatment with a herbal decoction for supporting Vital Qi (Zheng Qi) and invigorating the Blood. The 31 patients in group I were treated with radiotherapy only. The effects of the combined therapy were evaluated in all patients during a follow-up period of 5 years.

Prescription for group II

HUO XUE TANG

Decoction for Invigorating the Blood

*Tao Ren* (Semen Persicae) 6g

*Hong Hua* (Flos Carthami Tinctorii) 6g

*Dan Shen* (Radix Salviae Miltiorrhizae) 15g

*Dang Gui* (Radix Angelicae Sinensis) 15g

*Chuan Xiong* (Rhizoma Ligustici Chuanxiong) 10g

Prescription for group III

FU ZHENG HUO XUE TANG

Decoction for Supporting Vital Qi and Invigorating the Blood

*Dang Shm* (Radix Codonopsis Pilosulae) 15g

*HuangQi* (Radix Astragali seu Hedysari) 15g

*Mai Men Dong* (Radix Ophiopogonis Japonici) 15g

*Xuan Shm* (Radix Scrophulariae Ningpoensis) 20g

*She Gan* (Rhizoma Belamcandae Chinensis) 12g

*Shu Di Huang* (Radix Rehmanniae Glutinosae Conquita) 12g

*Nu Zhen Zi* (Fructus Ligustri Lucidi) 12g

*Tao Ren* (Semen Persicae) 6g

*Hong Hua* (Flos Carthami Tinctorii) 6g

*Dan Shen* (Radix Salviae Miltiorrhizae) 15g

*Dang Gui* (Radix Angelicae Sinensis) 15g

*Chuan Xiong* (Rhizoma Ligustici Chuanxiong) 15g

Results

There was no significant difference in the short-term remission rates between the groups.

The side-effects of radiotherapy such as mucosal hyperemia, local erosion of the mucosa, mouth ulcers, edema, and obvious pain when eating were significantly more severe in group I than in groups II and III ( $P < 0.01$ ).

The five-year survival rates were 35.5%, 51.5% and 61.8% respectively for groups I, II and III, with the rate being significantly lower in group I ( $P < 0.01$ ).

The distant metastasis rates were 19.35%, 27.27% and 11.76% respectively for the three groups, with the rate in group II being significantly higher ( $P < 0.05$ ).

In group II, there was a significant decrease in the number of CD<sub>3</sub> and CD<sub>4</sub> T cell sub-populations and in the number of NK cells ( $P < 0.05$ ).

*Conclusion:* Materia medica for supporting Vital Qi (Zheng Qi) and invigorating the Blood can improve the long-term survival rate of patients with nasopharyngeal cancer when combined with radiotherapy. However, it should be kept in mind that combining materia medica for invigorating the

Blood with radiotherapy may increase the distant metastasis risk for these patients. The authors suggest that materia medica for supporting Vital Qi should be added to the prescription to counter this risk.