Author's response to reviews

Title: Response of lymphocyte subsets and cytokines to Shenyang prescription in Sprague-Dawley rats with tongue squamous cell carcinomas induced by 4NQO

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Author's response to reviews: see over
Dear editors:

Thank you for your letter of 01/03/07 indicating our paper **Response of lymphocyte subsets and cytokines to Shenyang prescription in Sprague-Dawley rats with tongue squamous cell carcinomas induced by 4NQO** (MS: 1728714112121869) by Jiang, et al can be resubmitted after with revision. I appreciate the prompt and constructive review. We have revised our manuscript as indicated in bold as suggested by reviewers point by point. Specific points include the followings:

**Major:**

1. We added the details for “Shenyang” prescription as follow: **As a Traditional Chinese medicine compound, “Shenyang” prescription was made from four kinds of herbs, Radix codonopsis, Radix astragali, Salvia miltiorrhiza and glossy privet fruit in Shanghai No.3 Traditional Chinese Medicine Factory in China. All herbs used in the present study were provided by Shanghai Herbs Company (Shanghai, China). Traditional controls on cultivation and modern technologies on production were used to ensure that the composition was stable for each of the 4 components. The percentages of the 4 components were Radix codonopitis(30%), Radix astragali(30%), Salvia miltiorrhiza(10%) and Glossy privet fruit(30%).**

2. We added the explanations about animals dividing group as followings: The 61 rats with oral tumors were divided into 4 groups by stratified random sampling. “Shenyang” prescription group I (16 mice), “Shenyang” prescription group II (15 mice), positive controls (15 mice) and negative controls (15 mice). All of the 61 rats had squamous cell carcinoma with different stage and size. The pathological results had been confirmed by three pathologists. Each medicated group has a comparable number of rats with each of the 3 lesions.

3. We added to explain the reasons for selecting acanthopanax senticoside as positive herb in this study. By now some studies reported that acanthopanax senticoside can regulate the cellular immunity and factor, indicating that AS can be used as an assistant drug to regulate the function of immunity in the patients with cancers.

4. We provided the evidence that “Shenyang” prescription could regulate the function of immunity in the patients with oral cancers. Our previous clinical research showed that “Shenyang”, a traditional Chinese medicine prescription made from Radix codonopitis, Radix astragali, Salvia miltiorrhiza and Glossy privet fruit, increases the post-operative survival rate of patients with oral SCCs and the mechanism of action may involve stimulation of the patient’s immune function [7].

5. We modified the Figures 2-5 according to the request.
6. We made a clerical error in our manuscript. The dose of group II was equivalent to human dosage not group I. We have revised. “The doses for “Shenyang” prescription group II and the positive control were equivalent to human dosages.”

7. Our previous clinical study implied that 15 days treatment was as one cycle. So we also selected 15 days to be as “Shenyang” treatment regimen in this study.

8. We have revised that “The percentages of CD3+CD4+ T lymphocytes were significantly higher after medication than before in “Shenyang” prescription group I and II as well as the positive controls (P<0.05)” shown in figure 3.

9. From our results, it does not get the conclusion that Shenyang is useful against other carcinogen induced tumor. The result just predicts that Shenyang will be useful against 4NQO induced tumor at tongue. From our previous clinical results, it implied that Shenyang was useful against human oral cancers.

10. Whether there is any other mechanism cannot be sure by now. We are doing some in-depth research to explore the other mechanism and the results will be published soon.

I believe that the suggested changes have considerably strengthened the current version. I greatly appreciate your consideration of our work again.

Sincerely,

Wantao Chen