Reviewer’s report

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

Version: 3 Date: 2 January 2007

Reviewer: Rathin K Bhattacharya

Reviewer’s report:

General

The paper entitled Responses to lymphocyte subsets and cytokines to Shenyang prescription in Sprague-Dawley rats with tongue squamous cell carcinomas induced by 4-NQO describes that 4-NQO induced tongue cancer shows abnormalities in lymphocyte subsets. Tumor progression is associated with an aggressive disturbance of immune function. Shenyang improves this function. The experiments have been conducted well and very significant results obtained have been interpreted in the light of known information. The paper may be acceptable for publication after the following points are clarified.

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Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

1. What is the composition of Shenyang, and what is it used for?
2. Why Acanthopanax senticodide was administered as positive control? What is the physiological role of this substance?
3. Shenyang may have improved the immune response, but what ingredient of this is responsible?
4. Is there any other mechanism other than immune modification by which Shenyang may inhibit tumor progression?
5. Results may not predict that Shenyang will be useful against other carcinogen induced tumor at various sites.

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Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

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Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

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What next?: Unable to decide on acceptance or rejection until the authors have responded to the major compulsory revisions

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interest