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Herbal decoction-based combination therapy of Chinese hepatic cell carcinoma: A retrospective clinical study

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Aim: The main of the study is to contribute a humble effort to promote Chinese traditional medicine, a retrospective clinical study was performed to assess the efficacy of Chinese herbal decoction-based combination treatment of hepatic cell carcinoma (HCC).

Methods: 42 hospitalized patients with histologically confirmed HCC from Jan 2012 to Dec 2014 were selected randomly, including 22 cases in the control group for conventional therapy of surgical resection and/or chemo-radiotherapy as usual; and 20 patients in the study group for combined treatment of “warm and removing” decoction (WRD) on the basis of standard care. In the meantime, evaluation of clinical characteristics and quality of life was assessed.

Results: There was a significant difference ($P < 0.05$) in the comparison of AFP (alpha feto protein)/ALT (alanine transaminase) level between control and study groups. The DCR (disease control rate) was 43% in the study group compared with 34% in the control group. Three-month PFS (Progression-Free-Survival) and TTP (Time-to-Progression) rates were 60%, 35% for WRD patients and 45%, 40% for control patients, respectively. The retrospective clinical study showed no overall survival (OS) benefit for HCC patients treated with WRD compared with control, while the QOL (quality of life) evaluation seemed to predict survival better for WRD patients than that for control patients.

Conclusions: Chinese herbs in the WRD may have the ability of increasing cellular immunity and reducing surgical or chemo-radiotherapeutic lesions. Chinese herbs of WRD might be an additional choice with its better benefits and tolerability in the combination treatment of HCC.