

Cancer Care

with Chinese Medicine

The primary objectives of cancer treatment are to cure the patient and to prolong and improve their quality of life. Treatment with Western medicine may involve surgery, radiation therapy, chemotherapy, hormonal therapy, or some combination of these. However, the adverse side effects produced by radiotherapy and chemotherapy present a major problem in clinical practice. Some patients have to suspend the treatment because these side effects are too severe to tolerate.

In China, government funded research into the use of Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM), as an adjunct for cancer care, has produced extremely promising results, such as, improving hematopoiesis, protecting renal and hepatic functions, and decreasing gastrointestinal reactions. The use of acupuncture and Chinese herbal medicine has proven effective in protecting bone marrow and preventing leukopenia and thrombocytopenia. In turn, this protects the immune system from damage so that patients can better tolerate western treatment. It can also reduce nausea, vomiting, poor appetite, ulceration, abdominal pain, fatigue, and diarrhea. All can have a significant impact on the patients' recovery.

Fu Zheng therapy (a branch of Chinese herbal medicine) is an immune-enhancing herbal medicine regime used routinely in hospitals throughout China. This protocol is used to support immunity and to control malignant growth in conjunction with modern cancer therapies. The principle herbs used in Fu Zheng therapy fall into three main categories. The first, tonic herbs, increase the number and activity of immunologically active cells and proteins. The second, toxin-clearing herbs, clear the blood of waste products from the

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destruction of tumors, and the last, blood activating herbs, reduce the coagulation and inflammatory reactions associated with immune response. The value of this regime has also been demonstrated in clinical studies in the United States, in treating a wide range of immune-compromised conditions including cancer, AIDS, and chronic Epstein-Barr virus.

In addition to Chinese herbal therapy, acupuncture has proven invaluable in cancer treatment protocols to alleviate persistent pain, relieve anxiety, and reduce chemotherapy-induced nausea, as noted by the World Health Organization.

Integration of Traditional Chinese medicine and western biomedicine improves long term treatment outcomes, especially for patients with intermediate-stage or late-stage cancer, by alleviating their suffering, raising their quality of life, and reducing the rate of recurrence and metastasis.

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