

PEER REVIEW HISTORY

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ARTICLE DETAILS

TITLE (PROVISIONAL)	Validating traditional Chinese syndrome features in varied stages of chronic gastritis malignant transformation: study protocol for a cross-sectional study
AUTHORS	Zhang, Yi; Liu, Yue; Song, Rui; Zhang, Li; Su, Zeqi; Li, Yannan; Chen, Runhua; Shi, Ning; Zhao, Xia; Du, Shiyu; Ding, Xia

VERSION 1 – REVIEW

REVIEWER	Rui Morais Serviço de Gastreenterologia, Centro Hospitalar São João, Porto, Portugal
REVIEW RETURNED	26-Dec-2017

GENERAL COMMENTS	<p>The authors describe a study protocol entitled “Validating traditional Chinese syndrome features in varied stages of chronic gastritis malignant transformation: study protocol for a cross-sectional study”. The authors are to be congratulated for the study design and scope, planning to include 2000 patients in order to primarily evaluate the prevalence of Traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) syndrome patterns in varied stages of chronic gastritis (CG) transformation. This study is of clinical interest since identification of TCM syndrome patterns may lead to an active intervention on CG malignant transformation. It is properly designed and the strengths and limitations are correctly addressed. The planned statistical analysis is described in depth.</p> <p>There are a few minor comments that need to be addressed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The reason for undergoing an upper endoscopy is included in the data collection? - The current use of proton pump inhibitors at the time of upper endoscopy should be included. - At the time of the data collection the investigator is blinded for the group the patient has been included?
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REVIEWER	Toshimi Chiba Iwate Medical University, Japan
REVIEW RETURNED	05-Apr-2018

GENERAL COMMENTS	<p>Drs. Yin and Ding, et al reported ‘Validating traditional Chinese syndrome features in varied stages of chronic gastritis malignant transformation: study protocol for a cross-sectional study’. The protocol is well-presented. The reviewer has some comments.</p> <p>Comments</p> <p>1. In Introduction, the reviewer do not know well about TCM syndrome. Please describe the definition of TCM syndrome and TCM syndrome related signs in the details.</p>
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	<p>2. We have many kinds of TCM and modern medicines. Which TCM and modern medicine would the authors focus on this study. Please describe in Methods.</p> <p>3. In Recruitment, how the authors determined the number of patients? Please explain the reason of numbers.</p> <p>4. In References, 12 papers are Chinese among 27 papers, the reviewer is afraid whether this article would be suitable for an international Journal. Then, please describe summarize or results in these Chinese Journals in the details in Introduction or Discussions.</p>
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VERSION 1 – AUTHOR RESPONSE

Response to reviewer 1's comments

1. The reason for undergoing an upper endoscopy is included in the data collection?

Response: Thanks for reviewer's kind comments. We have added a brief explanation of the reason why an upper gastrointestinal endoscopy based screening process should be conducted by study personnel in the "Recruitment" section.

2. The current use of proton pump inhibitors at the time of upper endoscopy should be included.

Response: We have noticed the reviewer's kind suggestions here. It is very important to include information of current use of proton pump inhibitors at the time of upper endoscopy in the present cross-sectional study. In fact, this information has been gathered in the study process. However, to make this key point clear, we have made necessary revisions in the "Outcome measures and overview of CRFs" section (Table 1).

3. At the time of the data collection the investigator is blinded for the group the patient has been included?

Response: Yes. At the time of the data collection the investigators are blinded for the groups the patients may be included. We have added a statement in the "Data and samples collection" section.

Response to reviewer 2's comments

1. In Introduction, the reviewer do not know well about TCM syndrome. Please describe the definition of TCM syndrome and TCM syndrome related signs in the details.

Response: Thanks for reviewer's kind request, this is very important. We have added definition of TCM syndrome and TCM syndrome related signs in the "Introduction" section.

2. We have many kinds of TCM and modern medicines. Which TCM and modern medicine would the authors focus on this study. Please describe in Methods.

Response: Thanks for reviewer's kind comments here. In our present study, we mainly focus on syndrome-targeted treatment strategies by TCM herbal prescriptions. We have described it in "Introduction" section accordingly.

3. In Recruitment, how the authors determined the number of patients? Please explain the reason of numbers.

Response: According to reviewer's request here, we have added detailed description of how the sample size is calculated in the "Recruitment" section.

4. In References, 12 papers are Chinese among 27 papers, the reviewer is afraid whether this article

would be suitable for an international Journal. Then, please describe summarize or results in these Chinese Journals in the details in Introduction or Discussions.

Response: Thanks for reviewer's kind comments. In reference, we currently have 12 papers in Chinese among 27 papers. The summary of content and results of these Chinese journals has been shown in the "Introduction" and "Diagnostic criteria" sections, including the benefits of TCM syndrome-targeted interventions on CG, the TCM and modern medicine consensus and guidelines on CG Diagnosis and Treatment.

VERSION 2 – REVIEW

REVIEWER	Toshimi Chiba, MD,PhD Iwate medical University, Japan
REVIEW RETURNED	04-May-2018
GENERAL COMMENTS	Drs. Yin and Ding, et al revised 'Validating traditional Chinese syndrome features in varied stages of chronic gastritis malignant transformation: study protocol for a cross-sectional study'. The protocol is well-presented. The reviewer has no comments.
REVIEWER	Rui Morais Gastroenterology Department
REVIEW RETURNED	07-Jun-2018 The authors present a study protocol entitled "Validating traditional Chinese syndrome features in varied stages of chronic gastritis malignant transformation: study protocol for a cross-sectional study". The study is well designed, describing in detail patient's recruitment, data collection, statistical analysis and expected outcomes. The strengths and limitations of the study are addressed in depth, highlighting the potential role of Traditional Chinese Medicine in the treatment strategies of the various stages of chronic gastritis transformation. Previous comments on the article were correctly addressed.

VERSION 2 – AUTHOR RESPONSE

Response to reviewer 1 and reviewer 2's comments:

Response: We appreciate all the kind comments from reviewers. Thank you for favorable consideration of our paper.

We hope that the revisions will meet with approval. Please don't hesitate to contact me if there are any other questions regarding our manuscript. Thank you for all the kind comments, suggestions, and decision.