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[Intervention Review]

# Elemene for the treatment of lung cancer

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## ABSTRACT

### Background

Elemene, isolated from the Chinese medicinal herb *Rhizoma Zedoariae* and be used to treat patients with lung cancer in China. Until now, the effects have not been systematically reviewed.

### Objectives

The purpose of this review was to determine the effectiveness and safety of elemene in the treatment of patients with lung cancer.

### Search methods

We searched according to the strategy suggested by Lung Cancer group: the Cochrane Central Register of Controlled Trials (*The Cochrane Library* 2006, Issue 2); MEDLINE (1966 to June 2006); EMBASE (1974 to June 2006); OVID (1950 to June, 2006); CBMdisc on Chinese Biomedical Literature (Issue 1 2004 Chinese Language) and CNKI (Chinese Knowledge Internet 1994 to June 2006).

### Selection criteria

Only randomised controlled trials (RCTs) that compared elemene with chemotherapy agents, radiotherapy, surgery, physical therapy or other effective Chinese herb therapy, either alone or in combination, had been sought in this review, regardless of language or publication status.

### Data collection and analysis

Two authors telephoned the original trial authors of claimed randomised controlled trials and made a decision about trial inclusion and exclusion.

### Main results

We identified 20 trials which claimed to use random allocation. Sixteen study authors were contacted by telephone and we discovered that they misunderstood the randomisation procedure and the trials were identified as non-RCTs. We were unable to contact the authors of the remaining four studies and these have been allocated to the 'Studies awaiting assessment' section.

### Authors' conclusions

There is no evidence from randomised controlled trials to confirm or refute the effectiveness of elemene as a treatment for lung cancer. Randomised clinical trials, on elemene for the treatment of lung cancer are needed in order to define the efficacy and acceptability of elemene for lung cancer.

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## PLAIN LANGUAGE SUMMARY

### **Elemene in the treatment of lung cancer**

Elemene was reported to be effective in alleviating the pain, decreasing the side effects of chemotherapy and improving the quality of life of lung cancer patients in some studies, but the review authors found that all of the claimed randomised controlled trials were not true RCTs. This meant that the authors cannot determine the role of elemene in lung cancer treatment. The authors pointed out that randomized controlled clinical trials on elemene for the treatment of lung cancer are needed in order to better define the efficacy and safety of elemene for lung cancer.