Esophageal cancer is the eighth most common cancer in the world and has obvious differences in geographical distribution, which show a greater variation than for most other types of cancer. Some 40 percent of these cancers are squamous cell carcinomas occurring in the middle third of the esophagus, with a similar proportion accounted for by adenocarcinomas in the lower third and at the cardia. Other types of esophageal cancer include lymphomas, leiomyosarcomas and metastatic cancers. The incidence of squamous cell carcinoma of the esophagus in China is particularly high; overall, esophageal cancer accounts for approximately one quarter of cancer deaths. The male to female morbidity and mortality ratios are both in the region of 1.6:1.

Cancer can occur anywhere in the esophagus, appearing as a narrowing of the lumen, a lump or a plaque, with 60-70 being the peak age for diagnosis. Heavy drinking and smoking are both major risk factors, especially for squamous cell carcinoma; other risks include achalasia (failure of the lower esophageal sphincter to open properly) and chronic acid reflux. Since it is difficult to diagnose the early stage of esophageal carcinoma, some 70-80 percent of patients are already at the intermediate or late stages of the disease before it is recognized. Once the cancer has reached this stage, prognosis is very poor, with a five-year survival rate as low as 5 percent.

Surgery to remove the tumor is normally only possible in the early stages before infiltration outside the esophageal wall has occurred. Chemotherapy or radiotherapy can be used after surgery to relieve symptoms. For patients with late-stage esophageal cancer, chemotherapy or a combination of radiotherapy and chemotherapy is the main method of treatment; although the cancer is not cured, symptoms can be relieved and survival prolonged.

**Clinical manifestations**

- The first symptom is usually difficulty in swallowing solids; dysphagia progresses and worsens to involve soft foods and then liquids.
- Dysphagia is often accompanied by pain behind the sternum and vomiting of mucus.
- The early stages may be accompanied by a sensation of a lump or foreign body in the throat.
- Dysphagia and loss of appetite frequently result in significant weight loss.
- Swelling in the neck may also occur.
**Etiology and pathology**

**Depression and binding of Liver Qi**
Emotional problems lead to Depression and binding of Liver Qi and Qi stagnation. Dietary irregularities damage the Spleen and Stomach and gradually consume Body Fluids resulting in Qi Depression and generation of Phlegm, which blocks the passageways and causes Qi to ascend rather than descend, manifesting as difficulty in swallowing and emaciation.

**Phlegm stasis and Qi stagnation**
Damage to the Spleen and Stomach results in failure to transform Phlegm-Damp, thus leading to the formation of Phlegm stasis and tumors.

**Depletion of Qi and Blood due to debility in old age**
Debility in old age or a prolonged illness can cause depletion of Qi and Blood and desiccation of Body Fluids resulting in dysphagia in the upper part of the esophagus due to Qi failing to move.

**Pattern identification and treatment principles**

**INTERNAL TREATMENT**

**DEPRESSION AND BINDING OF LIVER QI**

**Main symptoms and signs**
Discomfort after intake of food, occasional hiccoughs, oppression in the chest, a bitter taste in the mouth, distension and pain in the hypochondrium, headache and dizziness, irritability, and insomnia. The tongue body is pale red with a thin yellow coating; the pulse is wiry and thready.

**Treatment principle**
Soothe the Liver, regulate Qi and dissipate lumps.

**Prescription**

**XIAO YAO SAN HE XUAN FU DAI ZHE TANG JIA JIAN**
Free Wanderer Powder Combined With Inula and Hematite Decoction, with modifications

- **Chai Hu** (Radix Bupleuri) 10g
- **Bai Shao** (Radix Paeoniae Lactiflorae) 10g
- **Fu Ling** (Sclerotium Poriae Cocos) 30g
- **Gua Lou** (Fructus Trichosanthis) 20g
- **Dai Zhe Shi** (Haematitum) 30g, decocted for at least 30 minutes before adding the other ingredients
- **Xuan Fu Hua** (Flos Inulae) 10g
- **Chen Pi** (Pericarpium Citri Reticulatae) 10g
- **Zhu Ru** (Caulis Bambusae in Taeniis) 10g
- **Shan Dou Gen** (Radix Sophorae Tonkinensis) 15g
- **Huai Niu Xi** (Radix Achyranthis Bidentatae) 10g
- **Yu Jin** (Radix Curcumae) 10g
- **Bai Ying** (Herba Solani Lyrati) 20g

**Explanation**
- **Chai Hu** (Radix Bupleuri) and **Yu Jin** (Radix Curcumae) allow constrained Liver Qi to flow freely and clear Heat.
- **Gua Lou** (Fructus Trichosanthis), **Xuan Fu Hua** (Flos Inulae), **Zhu Ru** (Caulis Bambusae in Taeniis), **Fu Ling** (Sclerotium Poriae Cocos), and **Chen Pi** (Pericarpium Citri Reticulatae) regulate Qi and transform Phlegm.
- **Dai Zhe Shi** (Haematitum), **Huai Niu Xi** (Radix Achyranthis Bidentatae) and **Bai Shao** (Radix Paeoniae Lactiflorae) calm the Liver and bear counterflow Qi downward.
- **Shan Dou Gen** (Radix Sophorae Tonkinensis) and **Bai Ying** (Herba Solani Lyrati) clear Heat, benefit the throat and have anti-cancer properties.

**PHLEGM STASIS AND QI STAGNATION**

**Main symptoms and signs**
Inhibited food intake, stifling oppression in the chest or distension and fullness in the chest and diaphragm, discomfort in the chest and back,
cough with profuse phlegm, and nausea and vomiting with frequent vomiting of mucus. The tongue body is enlarged with tooth marks and a white and greasy coating; the pulse is wiry and slippery.

**Treatment principle**
Transform Phlegm and dispel stasis, bear Qi downward and dissipate lumps.

**Prescription**
BEI MU GUA LOU SAN HE XUAN FU DAI ZHE TANG JIA JIAN
Fritillary Bulb and Trichosanthes Fruit Powder Combined With Inula and Hematite Decoction, with modifications

Chuan Bei Mu (Bulbus Fritillariae Cirrhosae) 10g
Gua Lou (Fructus Trichosanthis) 20g
Tian Hua Fen (Radix Trichosanthis) 20g
Fu Ling (Sclerotium Poriae Cocos) 20g
Ju Hong (Pars Rubra Epicarpii Citri Erythrocarpae) 10g
Jie Geng (Radix Platycodi Grandiflori) 10g
Dai Zhe Shi‡ (Haematitum) 30g, decocted for at least 30 minutes before adding the other ingredients
Xuan Fu Hua (Flos Inulae) 10g
Fa Ban Xia (Rhzomae Pinelliae Ternatae Praeparata) 10g
Dan Nan Xing (Pulvis Arisaematis cum Felle Bovis) 10g
Xia Ku Cao (Spica Prunellae Vulgaris) 20g
Wei Ling Xian (Radix Clematidis) 30g
Hai Zao (Herba Sargassii) 10g
Teng Li Gen (Radix Actinidiae Chinensis) 30g

**Explanation**
- Chuan Bei Mu (Bulbus Fritillariae Cirrhosae), Gua Lou (Fructus Trichosanthis), Hai Zao (Herba Sargassii), Xia Ku Cao (Spica Prunellae Vulgaris), and Dan Nan Xing (Pulvis Arisaematis cum Felle Bovis) clear Heat, transform Phlegm and dissipate lumps.
- Ju Hong (Pars Rubra Epicarpae Citri Erythrocarpae), Jie Geng (Radix Platycodi Grandiflori) and Wei Ling Xian (Radix Clematidis) dispel Phlegm and benefit the throat.
- Xuan Fu Hua (Flos Inulae), Fa Ban Xia (Rhzomae Pinelliae Ternatae Praeparata), Fu Ling (Sclerotium Poriae Cocos), and Dai Zhe Shi‡ (Haematitum) bear counterflow Qi downward and stop vomiting.
- Teng Li Gen (Radix Actinidiae Chinensis) and Tian Hua Fen (Radix Trichosanthis) clear Heat, relieve Toxicity and have anti-cancer properties.

**DEPLETION OF QI AND BLOOD DUE TO DEBILITY IN OLD AGE**

**Main symptoms and signs**
Dysphagia, emaciation and lack of strength, a sal低 yellow or dull white facial complexion, thin or loose stools, spontaneous sweating, a faint low or hoarse voice, and vomiting of mucus. The tongue body is pale with a thin or thin white coating; the pulse is deep, thready and forceless.

**Treatment principle**
Supplement Qi and nourish the Blood, transform Phlegm and dissipate lumps.

**Prescription**
SHI QUAN DA BU TANG HE XUAN FU DAI ZHE TANG JIA JIAN
Perfect Major Supplementation Decoction Combined With Inula and Hematite Decoction, with modifications

Dang Shen (Radix Codonopsitis Pilosulae) 30g
Jiao Bai Zhu (Rhzomae Atractylodis Macrocephalae, scorched) 9g
Fu Ling (Sclerotium Poriae Cocos) 9g
Mu Xiang* (Radix Aucklandiae Lappae) 6g
Chao Chen Pi (Pericarpium Citri Reticulatae, stir-fried) 9g
Dang Gui (Radix Angelicae Sinensis) 30g
Chuan Xiong (Rhizoma Ligustici Chuanxiong) 12g
Shu Di Huang (Radix Rehmanniae Glutinosae Conquita) 12g
Bei Shao (Radix Paeoniae Lactiflorae) 15g
He Shou Wu (Radix Polygoni Multiflori) 20g
Ji Xue Teng (Caulis Spatholobi) 30g
Huang Qi (Radix Astragali seu Hedysari) 30g
Huang Jing (Rhizoma Polygonati) 20g
Mu Li‡ (Concha Ostreae) 15g, decocted for 20-30 minutes before adding the other ingredients
Explanation

- **Dang Shen** (Radix Codonopsis Pilosulae), **Huang Qi** (Radix Astragali seu Hedysari) and **Huang Jing** (Rhizoma Polygonati) supplement Qi.

- **Mu Xiang** (Radix Aucklandiae Lappae), **Chao Chen Pi** (Pericarpium Citri Reticulatae, stir-fried), **Jiao Bai Zhu** (Rhizoma Atractylodis Macrocephalae, scorch-fried), and **Fu Ling** (Sclerotium Poriae Cocos) dry Dampness, regulate Qi and assist the Spleen’s transformation and transportation function.

- **Dang Gui** (Radix Angelicae Sinensis), **Chuan Xiong** (Rhizoma Ligustici Chuanxiong), **Ji Xue Teng** (Caulis Spatholobi), **Shu Di Huang** (Radix Rehmanniae Glutinosae Conquita), **Bai Shao** (Radix Paeoniae Lactiflorae), and **He Shou Wu** (Radix Polygoni Multiflori) supplement, nourish and invigorate the Blood.

- **Mu Li** (Concha Ostreae) and **Xia Ku Cao** (Spica Prunellae Vulgaris) soften hardness and dissipate lumps.

- **Bai Hua She She Cao** (Herba Hedyotidis Diffusae) clears Heat, relieves Toxicity and has anti-cancer properties.

General modifications

1. For severe vomiting of blood, add **San Qi Fen** (Pulvis Radicis Notoginseng) 3g, **Yun Nan Bai Yao** (Yunnan White) 2g, **Xian He Cao** (Herba Agrimoniae Pilosae) 30g, and **E Jiao** (Gelatinum Corii Asini) 10g.

2. For pain in the chest and back, add **Bai Qu Cai** (Herba Chelidonii) 30g, **Chao Wu Ling Zhi** (Excrementum Trogopteri, stir-fried) 6g, **Pu Huang** (Pollen Typhae) 6g, and **Huang Yao Zi** (Rhizoma Dioscoreae Bulbiferae) 15g.

3. For an incessant irritating cough, add **Qian Hu** (Radix Peucedani) 10g, **Yu Xing Cao** (Herba Houttuyniae Cordatæ) 20g, **Gu Lou** (Fructus Tricosanthis) 20g, and **Dai Zhe Shi** (Haematitum) 30g.

4. Severe dysphagia can be treated by adding **Zi Nao Sha** (Sal Ammoniacum Purpureum) 30g to 1500ml of water and boiling down until 1000ml of the decoction is left. Filter off the liquid, add 1000ml of vinegar to it and boil until dry. Take 1.5g of the powder three times a day.

ACUPUNCTURE

Main points: CV-22 Tiantu, LI-17 Tianding, CV-13 Shangwan, CV-12 Zhongwan, and PC-6 Neiguan.

Auxiliary points

- For cancer in the upper part of the esophagus, add CV-21 Xuanji, and BL-13 Feishu joining BL-15 Xinshu.

- For cancer in the central part of the esophagus, add CV-17 Danzhong, and BL-20 Pishu joining BL-17 Geshu.

- For cancer in the lower part of the esophagus, add CV-14 Juque and BL-18 Ganshu.

- For vomiting and profuse phlegm, add ST-40 Fenglong.

- For oppression and pain in the chest, add LI-4 Hegu, PC-6 Neiguan, CV-20 Huagai, and ST-18 Rugen.

- For Qi Deficiency and lack of strength, add ST-36 Zusanli and CV-6 Qihai.

Technique: Insert obliquely downward to a depth of 1.0-1.5 cun at CV-22 Tiantu and manipulate the needle for 30 seconds; the standard insertion technique should be employed at the other points. Retain the needles for 20-30 minutes.

INTEGRATION OF CHINESE MEDICINE IN TREATMENT STRATEGIES FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF ESOPHAGEAL CANCER

Surgery and postoperative period

INTERNAL TREATMENT

Before surgery

Administration before surgery of TCM prescrip-
tions with materia medica for supporting Vital Qi (Zheng Qi) improves the patient’s chances of benefiting from the operation. A detailed discussion of the formulae involved can be found in Chapter 3.

**Postoperative period**

Two patterns often occur during the postoperative period:

- **Depletion of and damage to Qi and Blood and Spleen-Stomach disharmony**

**Treatment principle**

Soothe the Liver and fortify the Spleen, relieve Toxicity and inhibit tumors.

**Commonly used ingredients**

- Cu Chao Chai Hu (Radix Bupleuri, stir-fried with vinegar) 9g
- Huang Qin (Radix Scutellariae Baicalensis) 9g
- Bai Shao (Radix Paeoniae Lactiflorae) 10g
- Chao Bai Zhu (Rhizoma Atractylodis Macrocephalae, stir-fried) 9g
- Fu Ling (Sclerotium Poriae Cocos) 9g
- Mu Xiang* (Radix Aucklandiae Lappae) 6g
- Teng Li Gen (Radix Actinidiae Chinensis) 15g
- Ban Zhi Lian (Herba Scutellariae Barbatae) 30g
- Ji Nei Jin‡ (Endothelium Corneum Gigeriae Galli) 12g
- Shan Zha (Fructus Crataegi) 30g

- **Qi and Yin Deficiency**

**Treatment principle**

Supplement Qi and nourish Yin, relieve Toxicity and inhibit tumors.

**Commonly used ingredients**

- Xi Yang Shen* (Radix Panacis Quinquefolii) 3g, decocted separately from the other ingredients
- Sha Shen (Radix Glehniae seu Adenophorae) 15g
- Tai Zi Shen (Radix Pseudostellariae Heterophyllae) 15g
- Xuan Shen (Radix Scrophulariae Ningpoensis) 10g
- Mai Men Dong (Radix Ophiopogonis Japonici) 9g
- Shi Hu* (Herba Dendrobii) 10g
- Yu Zhu (Rhizoma Polygonati Odorati) 9g
- Bai Zhu (Rhizoma Atractylodis Macrocephalae) 9g
- Fu Ling (Sclerotium Poriae Cocos) 9g
- Jiao Shen Qu (Massa Fermentata, scorched) 15g
- Chen Pi (Pericarpium Citri Reticulatae) 9g
- Fo Shou (Fructus Citri Sarcodactylis) 9g
- Shan Zha (Fructus Crataegi) 15g
- Ban Zh Liian (Herba Scutellariae Barbatae) 30g
- Bai Hua She She Cao (Herba Hedyotidis Diffusae) 30g

**ACUPUNCTURE**

Acupuncture is very effective in treating difficulty in swallowing due to mutual obstruction of Phlegm and Qi and inhibited movement in the esophagus.

**Treatment principle**

Relieve Depression, transform Phlegm and open blockage.

**Points:** ST-36 Zusanli, BL-21 Weishu, PC-6 Neiguan, CV-17 Danzhong, and CV-22 Tiantu.

**Technique:** Apply the reducing method and retain the needles for 20-30 minutes.

**Explanation**

- Combining ST-36 Zusanli with BL-21 Weishu fortifies the Spleen and boosts the Stomach to supplement the Root of Later Heaven and dispel pathogenic factors.
- PC-6 Neiguan, the luo (network) point of the Yin linking vessel, bears pathogenic turbidity downward to regulate the functional activities of Qi.
- Combining CV-17 Danzhong, the Sea of Qi, with CV-22 Tiantu soothes Qi in the chest, dissipate lumps and benefits the throat.
- The overall combination of points alleviates swallowing difficulties by freeing the functional activities of Qi.

**EAR ACUPUNCTURE**

**Points:** Esophagus, Stomach and Shenmen.
**Technique:** Attach Wang Bu Liu Xing (Semen Vaccariae Segetalis) seeds at the points with adhesive tape. Tell the patient to press each seed for one minute ten times a day. Change the seeds every three days, using alternate ears.

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**Radiotherapy**

**INTERNAL TREATMENT**

Chinese materia medica commonly used in formulae to reduce the side-effects of radiotherapy in treating esophageal cancer vary depending on the treatment principle and patterns involved.

**Clearing Heat and relieving Toxicity**

*Jin Yin Hua* (Flos Lonicerae) 15g  
*Jian Qiao* (Fructus Forsythiae Suspensae) 15g  
*Huang Qin* (Radix Scutellariae Baicalensis) 9g  
*Yu Xing Cao* (Herba Houttuyniae Cordatae) 30g  
*Shan Dou Gen* (Radix Sophorae Tonkinensis) 9g  
*Ban Lan Gen* (Radix Isatidis seu Baphicacanthi) 20g  
*She Gan* (Rhizoma Belamcandae) 9g  
*Pu Gong Ying* (Herba Taraxaci cum Radice) 30g  
*She Mang* (Herba Houttuyniae Cordatae) 15g  
*Shan Dou Gen* (Radix Sophorae Tonkinensis) 9g  
*Ban Lan Gen* (Radix Isatidis seu Baphicacanthi) 20g  
*She Gan* (Rhizoma Belamcandae) 9g  
*Pu Gong Ying* (Herba Taraxaci cum Radice) 30g

**Cooling and supplementing Qi and Blood**

*Xiang Sha Liu Jun Zhi Tang*  
*Xi Yang Shen* (Radix Panacis Quinquefolii) 3g, decocted separately from the other ingredients  
*Huang Qi* (Radix Astragali seu Hedysari) 30g  
*He Shou Wu* (Radix Polygonati Multiflori) 20g  
*Ji Xue Teng* (Caulis Spatholobi) 30g  
*Fei Ban Xia* (Rhizoma Pinelliae) 20g  
*Mu Xiang* (Radix Aucklandiae Lappae) 15g  
*Jiao Shan Zha* (Fructus Crataegi, scorch-fried) 12g  
*Huang Di Hu* (Radix Rehmanniae Glutinosae) 15g  
*Jiao Mai Ya* (Fructus Hordei Vulgaris Germinatus, scorch-fried) 15g  
*Jiao Shen Qu* (Massa Fermentata, scorch-fried) 15g  
*Jiao Mai Ya* (Fructus Hordei Vulgaris Germinatus, scorch-fried) 15g  
*Jiao Shen Qu* (Massa Fermentata, scorch-fried) 15g

**Generating Body Fluids and moisturizing Dryness**

*Shen Di Hu* (Radix Rehmanniae Glutinosae) 15g  
*Xuan Shen* (Radix Scrophulariae Ningpoensis) 9g  
*Ma Men Dan* (Radix Ophiopogonis Japonici) 9g  
*Tian Hua Fen* (Radix Trichosanthis) 15g  
*Lu Gen* (Rhizoma Phragmites Communis) 30g  
*Shi Hu* (Herba Dendrobii) 15g  
*Tian Men Dan* (Radix Asparagi Cochinchinensis) 10g

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**FORTIFYING THE SPLEEN AND HARMONIZING THE STOMACH**

*For poor appetite as the main symptom*

**Prescription**

XIAO YAO SAN JIA JIAN  
Aucklandia and Amomum Six Gentlemen Decoction, with modifications

*Tai Zi Shen* (Radix Pseudostellariae Heterophyllae) 15g  
*Bai Zhu* (Rhizoma Atractylodis Macrocephala) 9g  
*Fu Ling* (Sclerotium Poriae Cocos) 9g  
*Gan Cao* (Radix Glycyrrhizae) 6g  
*Chen Pi* (Pericarpium Citri Reticulatae) 9g  
*Fa Ban Xia* (Rhizoma Pinelliae Ternatae Praeparata) 9g  
*Mu Xiang* (Radix Aucklandiae Lappae) 6g  
*Sha Ren* (Fructus Amomi) 3g  
*Jiao Shan Zha* (Fructus Crataegi, scorch-fried) 12g  
*Jiao Men Qu* (Massa Fermentata, scorch-fried) 12g  
*Jiao Mai Ya* (Fructus Hordei Vulgaris Germinatus, scorch-fried) 12g  
*Jiao Shen Qu* (Massa Fermentata, scorch-fried) 12g  
*Jiao Mai Ya* (Fructus Hordei Vulgaris Germinatus, scorch-fried) 12g  
*Jiao Mai Ya* (Fructus Hordei Vulgaris Germinatus, scorch-fried) 12g

**Alternative formula**

**Prescription**

XIAO YAO SAN JIA JIAN  
Free Wanderer Powder, with modifications

*Cu Chao Chai Hu* (Radix Bupleuri, stir-fried with vinegar) 15g  
*Dang Gui* (Radix Angelicae Sinensis) 15g  
*Bai Shao* (Radix Paeoniae Lactiflorae) 15g  
*Fu Ling* (Sclerotium Poriae Cocos) 9g  
*Bai Zhu* (Rhizoma Atractylodis Macrocephala) 9g  
*Gan Cao* (Radix Glycyrrhizae) 6g  
*Huang Lian* (Rhizoma Coptidis) 6g  
*Jiao Shan Zha* (Fructus Crataegi, scorch-fried) 15g  
*Jiao Shen Qu* (Massa Fermentata, scorch-fried) 15g  
*Jiao Mai Ya* (Fructus Hordei Vulgaris Germinatus, scorch-fried) 15g  
*Jiao Mai Ya* (Fructus Hordei Vulgaris Germinatus, scorch-fried) 15g
• For nausea and vomiting as the main symptom

**Prescription**
**ER CHEN TANG JIA JIAN**
Two Matured Ingredients Decoction, with modifications

Chao Chen Pi (Pericarpium Citri Reticulatae, stir-fried) 9g
Qing Ban Xia (Rhizoma Pinelliae Ternatae Depurata) 9g
Fu Ling (Sclerotium Poriae Cocos) 9g
Gan Cao (Radix Glycyrrhizae) 6g

**Modifications**
1. For vomiting due to Stomach-Cold, add Sheng Jiang (Rhizoma Zingiberis Officinalis Recens) 6g.
2. For vomiting due to Stomach-Heat, add Zhu Ru (Caulis Bambusae in Taeniis) 10g.

**Alternative formula**

**Prescription**
**JU PI ZHU RU TANG JIA JIAN**
Tangerine Peel and Bamboo Shavings Decoction, with modifications

Chen Pi (Pericarpium Citri Reticulatae) 9g
Fa Ban Xia (Rhizoma Pinelliae Ternatae Depurata) 9g
Fu Ling (Sclerotium Poriae Cocos) 9g
Gan Cao (Radix Glycyrrhizae) 6g
Zhu Ru (Caulis Bambusae in Taeniis) 15g
Dang Shen (Radix Codonopsis Pilosulae) 15g
Mai Men Dong (Radix Ophiopogonis Japonici) 9g
Pi Pa Ye (Folium Eriobotryae Japonicae) 20g
Sheng Jiang (Rhizoma Zingiberis Officinalis Recens) 6g
Da Zao (Fructus Ziziphi Jujubae) 10g

**Modifications**
1. For Stomach-Cold, remove Zhu Ru (Caulis Bambusae in Taeniis) and Mai Men Dong (Radix Ophiopogonis Japonici).
2. For Stomach-Heat, replace Dang Shen (Radix Codonopsis Pilosulae) with Ding Xiang (Flos Caryophylli) 5g.

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**Empirical formula**

Huang Qi (Radix Astragali seu Hedysari) 15-30g
Sheng Di Huang (Radix Rehmanniae Glutinosae) 15-30g
Shan Dou Gen (Radix Sophorae Tonkinensis) 15-30g
Lian Qiao (Fructus Forsythiae Suspensae) 15-30g
She Gen (Rhizoma Belamcandae Chinensis) 9-15g
Ban Lan Gen (Radix Isatidis seu Baphicacanthi) 15-30g
Xuan Shen (Radix Scrophulariae Ningpoensis) 9g
Chen Pi (Pericarpium Citri Reticulatae) 9g
Qing Ban Xia (Rhizoma Pinelliae Ternatae Depurata) 9g
Jiao Bai Zhu (Rhizoma Atractylodis Macrocephalae, scorched) 9g
Jiao Shen Qu (Massa Fermentata, scorched) 15-30g
Gua Lou (Fructus Trichosanthis) 15-30g

One bag per day is used to prepare a decoction, taken two or three times a day. Start taking three or four days before the radiotherapy course commences.

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**Chemotherapy**

**INTERNAL TREATMENT**

**Treatment principle**
Supplement Qi and nourish the Blood, fortify the Spleen and harmonize the Stomach, enrich and supplement the Liver and Kidneys, relieve Toxicity and transform Phlegm.

**Ingredients of basic formula**

Huang Qi (Radix Astragali seu Hedysari) 30g
Dang Shen (Radix Codonopsis Pilosulae) 15g
Bai Zhu (Rhizoma Atractylodis Macrocephalae) 9g
Fu Ling (Sclerotium Poriae Cocos) 9g
Chen Pi (Pericarpium Citri Reticulatae) 9g
Fa Ban Xia (Rhizoma Pinelliae Ternatae Depurata) 9g
Ji Nei Jin (Endothelium Corneum Galli) 12g
Jiao Shen Qu (Massa Fermentata, scorched) 20g
Nü Zhen Zi (Fructus Ligustri Lucidi) 15g
Gou Qi Zi (Fructus Lycii) 15g
Tu Si Zi (Semen Cuscutae) 15g
He Shou Wu (Radix Polygoni Multiflori) 20g
Dan Shen (Radix Salviae Miltiorrhizae) 20g
Shan Dou Gen (Radix Sophorae Tonkinensis) 9g
Chong Lou (Rhizoma Paridis) 15g

**Overall combined therapy**

**Purpose:** Enhancing the overall results obtained by the treatment strategy and preventing local constriction and recurrence.

**Treatment principle**
Supplement Qi and nourish the Blood, clear Heat and relieve Toxicity, fortify the Spleen and harmonize the Stomach, assisted by materia medica for softening hardness and dissipating lumps, stopping bleeding and inhibiting tumors.

**Prescription ingredients**

- **Huang Qi** (Radix Astragali seu Hedysari) 15-30g
- **Jin Yin Hua** (Flos Lonicerae) 15-30g
- **Shan Dou Gen** (Radix Sophorae Tonkinensis) 15-30g
- **Ban Lan Gen** (Radix Isatidis seu Baphicacanthi) 15-30g
- **Xuan Shen** (Radix Scrophulariae Ningpoensis) 9g
- **Chao Chen Pi** (Pericarpium Citri Reticulatae, stir-fried) 9g
- **Xia Ku Cao** (Spica Prunellae Vulgaris) 15g
- **Hai Zao** (Herba Sargassi) 9g
- **Xian He Cao** (Herba Agrimoniae Pilosae) 30g
- **Ji Xue Teng** (Caulis Spatholobi) 30g
- **Dan Shen** (Radix Salviae Miltiorrhizae) 20g
- **Gua Lou** (Fructus Trichosanthis) 15-30g
- **Xia Ku Cao** (Spica Prunellae Vulgaris) 9-15g
- **Hai Zao** (Herba Sargassi) 9-15g
- **Wei Ling Xian** (Radix Clematidis) 15g
- **Shan Dou Gen** (Radix Sophorae Tonkinensis) 9g
- **Long Kui** (Herba Solani Nigri) 20-30g
- **Chen Pi** (Pericarpium Citri Reticulatae) 9g
- **Bei Zhu** (Rhizoma Atractylodis Macrocephalae) 9g
- **Yi Yi Ren** (Semen Coicis Lachryma-jobi) 30g
- **Jiao Shan Zha** (Fructus Crataegi, scorch-fried) 12g
- **Jiao Shen Qu** (Massa Fermentata, scorch-fried) 12g
- **Jiao Mai Ya** (Fructus Hordei Vulgaris Germinatus, scorch-fried) 12g
- **Ban Zhi Lian** (Herba Scutellariae Barbatae) 30g
- **Chong Lou** (Rhizoma Paridis) 15-20g

One bag per day is used to prepare a decoction, taken twice a day on a long-term basis.

**Treatment notes**

Since early diagnosis of esophageal carcinoma is still difficult, 70-80 percent of patients are not suitable for surgery once they are eventually diagnosed with the disease. Even when surgery is performed in early-stage cases, there is still a significant possibility of recurrence or metastasis. Chemotherapy or a combination of chemotherapy and radiotherapy has so far only achieved limited success. Although postoperative chemotherapy should theoretically be able to control distant metastasis, there is so far no conclusive scientific evidence to prove that it does so. In my experience at the Sino-Japanese Friendship Hospital, integrating TCM with these therapies has increased the overall effect of the treatment in terms of relieving symptoms and prolonging survival.

TCM can not only attenuate the toxicity produced by radiotherapy for esophageal cancer, but also works synergistically by increasing sensitivity to radiotherapy, improving microcirculation and increasing the blood flow. Materia medica for
invigorating the Blood and transforming Blood stasis commonly used to achieve this effect include *HongHua* (Flos Carthami Tinctorii), *Su Mu* (Lignum Sappan), *Ji Xue Teng* (Caulis Spatholobi), *Chi Shao* (Radix Paeoniae Rubra), *San Qi Fen* (Pulvis Radicis Notoginseng), and *Chuan Xiong* (Rhizoma Ligustici Chuanxiong). However, large dosages of these materia medica must be avoided to counter any risk of distant metastasis during radiotherapy.

Most patients visiting the hospital clinic are already at the intermediate or late stage of esophageal cancer. Dual depletion of Qi and Blood, and Qi stagnation and Blood stasis are the two most frequently encountered patterns. In most instances, they are treated according to the principles of augmenting Qi and nourishing the Blood, assisted by loosening the chest, regulating Qi, transforming Blood stasis and relieving Toxicity.

**Commonly used materia medica include:**

- for supplementing Qi and nourishing the Blood  
  
  *HuangQi* (Radix Astragali seu Hedysari)  
  *Dang Shen* (Radix Codonopsis Pilosulae)  
  *Bai Zhu* (Rhizoma Atractylodis Macrocephalae)  
  *Dang Gui* (Radix Angelicae Sinensis)  
  *Ji Xue Teng* (Caulis Spatholobi)  
  *Dan Shen* (Radix Salviae Miltiorrhizae)

- for loosening the chest and regulating Qi  
  
  *Gua Lou* (Fructus Trichosanthis)  
  *Xie Bai* (Bulbus Allii Macrostemi)  
  *Chen Pi* (Pericarpium Citri Reticulatae)  
  *Yu Jin* (Radix Curcumae)  
  *Yan Hu Suo* (Rhizoma Corydalis Yanhusuo)

- for transforming Blood stasis and relieving Toxicity  
  
  *Ban Zhi Lian* (Herba Scutellariae Barbatae)  
  *Bai Hua She She Cao* (Herba Hedyotidis Diffusae)

- for symptomatic treatment  
  
  *Wei Ling Xian* (Radix Clematidis)  
  *Ji Xing Zi* (Semen Impatientis Balsaminae)  
  *Fa Ban Xia* (Rhizoma Pinelliae Ternatae Praeparata)  
  *Dan Nan Xing* (Pulvis Arisaematis cum Felle Bovis)

### Other therapies

#### DIET THERAPY

- After surgery, once patients can take food normally, they should follow a liquid or semi-liquid diet high in nutritional value with foods such as *Bai He Zhu* (Lily Congee) in combination with soups made from fresh meat stock, eggs, vegetables and fruits (see Chapter 7 for more information). Stimulating foods such as spicy or physically hot foods should be avoided.

  1. For patients with prevalence of Stomach-Cold, cook a portion of pig’s intestines with Chinese prickly ash (*Hua Jiao*, Pericarpium Zanthoxyli) 30g and peanuts 10g until all the ingredients are very tender; add salt to taste. Eat 30g each day.

  2. For patients with prevalence of Stomach-Heat, mash peanuts 50g and fresh lotus root 50g, add fresh milk 200ml and honey 30ml, and cook until very tender. Drink 30-50ml every evening.

- Patients should take food three to five times a day. If there is nausea and vomiting after food, patients should be advised to sit down for a while or walk around slowly; the symptoms should disappear very soon. Patients can also be given a decoction of fresh ginger 10g for frequent sipping. For incessant vomiting, decoct three pieces of persimmon calyx (*Shi Di*, Calyx Diospyri Kaki) and drink the liquid.

- During radiotherapy or chemotherapy, patients should take food with a high nutritional value that is easy to swallow such as milk, sponge cake, Chinese yam powder mixed with water, coriander, colza, jelly fungus, and laver.

- For patients at the late stage of esophageal cancer, pound Chinese chives (*Xie Bai*, Bulbus Allii Macrostemi) 100g into a juice, steam with two eggs and take separately in two equal portions;
alternatively, take Ling Jiao Zhou (Water Caltrop Congee) regularly.

- As part of the regular diet, patients should eat more pears, persimmons and honey; alcohol, cigarettes, chilli, hard and crunchy food such as potato crisps, and deep-fried food are contraindicated.

**QIGONG THERAPY**

Strengthening Qigong is suitable for this type of cancer, but should not be practiced where there is a risk of the patient catching a cold.

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**Clinical experience and case histories**

**LI PEIWEN**

**Case history**

A man of 38 first visited the Sino-Japanese Friendship Hospital in Beijing in June 1985 complaining of gradually worsening vomiting and dysphagia. The condition was diagnosed as carcinoma of the esophagus by radiographic and esophagoscopic examination. In September 1985, he underwent resection of the tumor by esophagogastrostomy. Histologic examination of the resected specimen gave the diagnosis of squamous cell carcinoma (stage III).

Two months later, the patient was referred to the TCM department. Since the operation, his general health had been poor, and he often suffered from fatigue, sweating, oppression and pain in the chest, reduced food intake, and poor sleep; urine and stool were normal. The tongue body was pale red with a slightly red tip and a yellow coating; the pulse was thready and weak.

**Pattern identification**

Qi and Yin Deficiency, Spleen-Stomach disharmony.

**Treatment principle**

Augment Qi and nourish Yin, fortify the Spleen and harmonize the Stomach, loosen the chest and regulate Qi, transform Blood stasis and relieve Toxicity.

**Ingredients of main prescription**

- **DangShen** (Radix Codonopsis Pilosulae) 20g
- **HuangQi** (Radix Astragali seu Hedysari) 30g
- **Mai Men Dong** (Radix Ophiopogonis Japonici) 15g
- **Wu Wei Zi** (Fructus Schisandrae) 9g
- **Gua Lou** (Fructus Trichosanthis) 20g
- **Yu Jin** (Radix Curcumae) 9g
- **Fu Ling** (Sclerotium Poriae Cocos) 12g
- **Ji Nei Jin** (Endothelium Corneum Gigeriae Galli) 12g
- **Fa Ban Xia** (Rhizoma Pinelliae Tematae Praeparata) 9g
- **Dan Nan Xing** (Pulvis Arisaematis cum Felle Bovis) 6g
- **Ji Xing Zi** (Semen Impatientis Balsaminae) 9g
- **Wei Ling Xian** (Radix Clematidis) 15g
- **Fu Xiao Mai** (Fructus Tritici Aestivi Levis) 30g

**Additions for poor appetite and poor sleep**

- **Jiao Shan Zha** (Fructus Crataegi, scorch-fried) 15g
- **Jiao Mai Ya** (Fructus Hordei Vulgaris Germinatus, scorch-fried) 15g
- **Jiao Shen Ju** (Massa Fermentata, scorch-fried) 15g
- **Bai Zi Ren** (Semen Biotae Orientalis) 20g
- **Chao Suan Zao Ren** (Semen Ziziphi Spinosae, stir-fried) 20g

The prescription was combined with **Jia Wei Xi Huang Jiao Nang** (Augmented Western Bovine Bezoar Capsule), two capsules twice a day, and **Tian Xian Wan** (Heavenly Goddess Pill), three pills twice a day.

The patient continued to follow the treatment for more than three years. The symptoms gradually improved and eventually disappeared. In February 1989, the patient was re-examined. Findings were in the normal range for chest X-ray, upper digestive tract radiography, liver and renal function tests, blood sedimentation rate, carcinoembryonic antigen, immunoglobulin, complement, and serum protein electrophoresis. There had been no recurrence or metastasis and the patient had survived for three and a half years since the definitive diagnosis was made.