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Efficacy of *Cordyceps sinensis* as an adjunctive treatment in hemodialysis patients: A systematic review and meta-analysis**Ong Bee Yean**

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Background & Aim: *Cordyceps sinensis* (*cordyceps*) has long been used as adjuvant therapy in hemodialysis patients. However, it remains controversial whether *cordyceps* supplementation is beneficial. This review evaluates current evidence on the efficacy and safety of natural and fermented *Cordyceps* preparations as adjunctive treatment in patients undergoing maintenance hemodialysis.

Methods: The Cochrane Central Register of Controlled Trials (CENTRAL), EMBASE, MEDLINE, China National Knowledge Infrastructure (CNKI) and Wanfang Database were searched for relevant randomized controlled trials up to March 2016. Two review authors independently selected trials for inclusion, extracted data, assessed the methodological quality and rated the quality of evidence with the GRADE (Grading of Recommendations Assessment, Development and Evaluation) approach.

Results: Twelve studies involving 655 participants were included. Evidence of poor to moderate-quality showed that *Cordyceps* plus conventional treatment compared to conventional treatment alone significantly improved C-reactive protein (SMD -0.61; 95% CI -1.00 to -0.22), high-sensitivity C-reactive protein (WMD -3.44 mg/L; 95% CI -3.89 to -2.99), serum albumin (WMD 3.07 g/L; 95% CI 1.59 to 4.55), malondialdehyde (WMD -1.95 nmol/L; 95% CI -2.24 to -1.66) and hemoglobin (WMD 9.56 g/L; 95% CI 3.65 to 15.47) levels. However, there was no significant improvement for serum creatinine and low-density lipoprotein cholesterol. Overall, most trials either did not monitor adverse events or poorly documented them.

Conclusions: Given the small number of trials included, the unclear methodological quality of the included trials and the high heterogeneity in pooled analyses, the evidence obtained in this review is insufficient to recommend the use of *Cordyceps* as adjunctive treatment in hemodialysis patients.

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