

The Clinical Use of *Coriolus versicolor* Supplementation in HIV+ Patients and the Impact on CD4 Count and Viral Load

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In our centre we've been working with patients with different immune deficiency disorders such as cancer patients, HIV & AIDS patients since '84. Initially I tried to work mainly with TCM, but during the years it became obvious to me that sometimes the immune system was so severely weakened that I had to find a balance between the allopathic medicine & complementary medicine, with the emphasis on TCM.

It is a fact that the AIDS virus deprives the sick person of the capacity to fight the illness because it destroys the T- lymphocytes, which results in a serious deficiency of the cellular immune system.

The TCM approach involves supporting the immune system of the patient rather than attacking the cause of the disease. TCM tends to look for the cause of disease in the quality of our internal health and the state of the immune system rather than the chance occurrence of contact with a virus. TCM has a long tradition in methods to increase the natural resistance to disease and has at their disposal many strategies to achieve this.

Most of the patients I'm working with are patients who are infected with HIV or those who have already developed the disease AIDS. A group of my patients is using HAART and most of my patients don't use any medication at all.

With the group of patients who choose not to use the antiretroviral therapy, the accent is on strengthening the immune system in order to prevent opportunistic infections and increase their CD-4 cells and decrease their viral load. The most important energies involved are Spleen, Liver, Kidney and Lung. The intestinal flora play an important role in the natural resistance to disease and we often find that the use of antibiotics in the past is responsible for the loss of, for the immune system essential, bacteria.

The spleen qi is responsible for the rebuilding of this part of the immune system, but in practice we often find that it is simpler to recommend preparations which assist the recovery of the intestinal flora such as symbionts. Acupuncture treatments are approximately once monthly.

This was my standard approach up till the end of December 1999. Since then I have been using *Coriolus* with a group of patients. I have deliberately chosen for a low dosage because this is my approach with acupuncture and Chinese herbs too. The initial dosage was 3 pills twice daily. After two weeks 3 pills once daily.

Please find the following case studies on the use of *Coriolus versicolor* supplementation with HIV+ Patients.

B Patient B (Male, 41 years old) HIV infected 3 years ago. Viral load was 152,000 and CD4 300, after half a year of acupuncture and Chinese herbs the viral load is 31,000 and CD4 460, stable since 6 months.

His health problems are mainly Candidiasis and diarrhoea. Both improved with acupuncture and Chinese herbs, but occur sometimes in stressful periods. He is finishing his own business and therefore having a stressful period at the moment.

Supplementation Schedule: Started January 10th, 2000; Coriolus-MRL six (6 tablets per day (3 grams) for 15 days and then three tablets per day.

Observations 1-February 7th, 2000. Patient has well formed stool and feels stronger. His blood will be tested at the end of February.

Observation 2-May 21st, 2000.

Patient B did not suffer from either candidiasis and diarrhoea from January to April. The Coriolus-MRL did not improve his stress (which is enormous due to the fact that he had to finish his own business and the end of his 15 year old relationship.)

Observation 3-August 31st, 2000

Patient B is still taking 3 tablets of Coriolus-MRL per day and feels very strong, no fatigue, candidiasis or diarrhoea and his stress slowly seems to be fading away.

Observation 4-February 10th, 2001

Patient B is very energetic and continues not to suffer from candidiasis and diarrhoea. The stress about finishing his business is gone and he makes a pretty relaxed impression. He started doing some sports again and he feels very strong. He is still taking 3 tablet of Coriolus per day.

His history of laboratory results are the following:

Patient B	January	May	August	December
Viral Load	31000	22000	12000	3200
CD-4	460	540	520	630
Count				

C Patient C (Male, 39 years old) HIV positive for 5 years (does not know how he was infected) Viral load 1100 and CD4-650 both stable since diagnosis.

Suffering from bronchitis, diarrhoea, night sweats, Hepatitis B. He does not have a healthy lifestyle, works at night and does not eat well. I am working with him for a year; his overall condition is improved.

Supplementation Schedule: Started January 15th, 2000; **Coriolus-MRL six (6 tablets per day (3 grams) for 15 days and then three tablets per day.**

Observations 1-February 17th, 2000.

Patient has put on weight and his liver is doing better, CD4 and viral load is still the same. He has more energy and did not get the flu (like the rest of Holland) or bronchitis. His stool did not change yet. He is going to have his blood tested in end of April.

Observation 2-May 21st, 2000

Patient C has not suffered from bronchitis or nightsweats from January to April. His diarrhoea is slowly improving.

However, he still does not have a healthy lifestyle. His lab results concerning his liver (due to Hepatitis) were improved.

Observation 3-August 31st, 2000

His August laboratory results were the following:

Patient C	January	April	August
Viral Load	1100	800	2400
CD-4	650	700	650
Count			

Patient C got gonorrhoea in July and had to be treated with antibiotics, after this his viral load changed to 2400 and his CD-4 count 650. His bronchitis and night sweats are still gone. Since this antibiotics in July his diarrhoea got worse, but is improving at this moment. His liver enzymes remained the same (which is still an improvement). **I advised him to double the supplementation level to six tablets per day.**

Observation 4-February 10th, 2001

Patient C is taking 6 tablets per day of Coriolus-MRL. He recovered well from his gonorrhoea and diarrhoea. He tries to live more healthy. He did not suffer from his old problems the bronchitis and night sweats. His liver enzymes improved. He is very happy with his undetectable viral load, which is a stimulant for him to drink less and eat more healthy, which is not really his lifestyle.

Patient C's updated laboratory results were:

Patient C	January	May	August	December
Viral Load	1100	800	2400	0
CD-4	650	700	650	680
Count				

D Patient D (Male, 51 years old) HIV positive for 17 years. Viral load is 10,000 and CD4 count is 600, stable since we started three years ago with acupuncture and Chinese herbs, before his CD4 was 400 and no test for viral load. Before acupuncture he was very tired and had just had herpes zoster. He was suffering from herpes simplex once a month and his stool was loose. After three years of acupuncture his energy is back to 60% his stool improved and his herpes simplex occurs every three months instead of every month.

Supplementation Schedule: Started January 24th, 2000; Coriolus-MRL six (6 tablets per day (3 grams) for 15 days and then three tablets per day.

Observations 1-February 29th, 2000. Patient has improved stool shape and being a perfectionist he said his energy raised to 70%.

Observation 2-May 21st, 2000.

Patient D's stool is normal, his energy is nearly back to the situation before he had his burnout. He had not had a herpes attack since January.

Observation 3-August 31st,2000

Patient D is feeling strong and his vitality is back to the situation before he had his burnout. He did not have any herpes attack now for 5 months. He continues to take 3 tablets of Coriolus-MRL per day.

Observation 4-February 10th, 2001

Patient D is still taking once daily the 3 tablets of Coriolus-MRL. His stool remains normal and he did not have a herpes attack at all. His vitality is back on the level before he had his burnout and he started working since October for 50% of day (he is happy with this development). He is dealing better with stress which is related to his work (IT).

A comparison of recent laboratory results were the following:

Patient D	January	April	August	December
Viral Load	10000	6500	5000	2400
CD-4	600	680	700	720
Count				

E Patient E (Female, 32 years old) 11 years HIV+. She was on HAART medication since January of 1998 because her CD4 cell count dropped from 700 to 300 with a high viral load. With the HAART medication her viral load was 50 and CD4 count 850. She had to stop the medication in December of 1999, because she was suffering from severe side effects as lipodystrophy and neuropathy increased. I have been working with her since November of 1999.

When treating a patient that has ceased HAART therapy, my policy is to provide a double dose of Chinese herbs.

Supplementation Schedule: **Started end of January with Coriolus-MRL six (6 tablets per day (3 grams) for 15 days and continued taking 6 tablets per day.**

Observation 1 –In February she has suffered with the flu and was very tired. She will be tested at the end of February and within two months; only then will we have a better idea of the impact of Coriolus-MRL.

Observation 2-May 21st, 2000

Patient E felt more energetic, his lipodystrophy is slowly improving and the neuropathy is gone. She started working again four days in the week and is back in the gym.

Observation 3-August 31st, 2000

A comparison of August laboratory results were the following:

Patient E					
	January	February	March	April	August
Viral Load	10000	300000	200000	150000	90000
CD-4	600	200	280	320	550
Count					
	one week	one month			
	after quitting	after quitting			
	HAART	HAART			

Patient E is feeling strong, more energetic, her lipodystrophy is still improving (slowly) and the neuropathy is gone. She is working four days in the week and she had only one flu attack. **She continues taking 2 x daily 3 tablets of Coriolus-MRL. Her hospital specialist agrees with us that at this moment she doesn't need to start the HAART medication, unless her CD-4 cells will drop and the viral load will increase.**

Observation 4-February 10th, 2001

Patient E's CD-4 count dropped a little, but she had the flu just prior to the December laboratory work. Her lipodystrophy was slowly improving but seems stable now, she has crix-belly and in spite of all her gym exercises: this seems to be the final stage. But she is satisfied with this, she does not look any longer as if she is seven months pregnant and they do not ask if she is expecting the baby. Her neuropathy was gone and she never has had any further problems again.

She is working now five days in the week and she does not feel tired and she visits the gym 3 x a week. She did not have the flu, which she usually suffers from in the winter. **She continues taking 6 tablets per day (2 x daily 3 tablets) of Coriolus-MRL.**

Patient E

	January	February	March	April	August	December
Viral Load	10000	300000	200000	150000	90000	42000
CD-4	600	200	280	320	550	480
Count						
	Week after	month after				
	Quitting HAART	quitting HAART				

F Patient F (Female, 39 years old) 13 years HIV positive. Viral load 12000 and CD4 cells 450, both stable since two years. I have worked with Patient F for eight years. Her main problems were Candidiasis, vaginal discharge and PAP smear test 3-4. Her smear test went down to 3 with acupuncture and Chinese herbs; the Candidiasis has improved but not gone.

Supplementation Schedule: Started end of January with Coriolus-MRL six (6 tablets per day (3 grams) for 15 days and then three tablets per day.

Observation 1-28th of February 2000. Patient F was pre-menstrual and normally suffered from discharge, this time she did not. She did not get the flu as she normally catches each winter.

Observation 2-May 21st, 2000.

Patient F has not had candidiasis from January to April. She has experienced an increase in vitality. Her next smear test will be in June.

Observation 3-August 31st, 2000

August laboratory results were the following:

Patient F	January	April	August
Viral Load	12000	10000	10000
CD-4	450	520	560
Count			

Patient F's viral load remains the same, the result of her smear test was 2, which is an improvement: 6 months ago it was still 3. She feels very energetic and she suffered one week of the candidiasis on her vacation, where she could not resist chocolate and cheese. She did not take drugs for her candidiasis. It was treated with acupuncture and Chinese herbs. She continues to take 1 x daily 3 tablets per day.

Observation 4-February 10th, 2001

Patient F's smear test is back to 1; back to a normal result, which she did not have for six (6) years. She feels energetic, she had in September a month where she did not feel energetic and she had a candidiasis infection again in that period, which she treated with Chinese herbs

and not with drugs. The rest of the time she felt very energetic and healthy . She continues taking 1 x 3 tablets of the Coriolus-MRL per day.

Patient F's latest updated laboratory results were:

Patient F	January	April	August	December
Viral Load	12000	10000	10000	6200
CD-4	450	520	560	630
Count				

G Patient G (Male, 53 years) has been HIV+ for 17 years. Viral load 22,000 and CD-4 cell count 450, with both counts stable for three (3) years. I worked with him for five (5) years, his main health problems are Hepatitis C, diarrhoea and chronic fatigue which made him stop his work as an art-director.

With acupuncture and Chinese herbs his health stabilises. The Hepatitis C does not bother him, his bloodwork concerning his liver is nearly normal. The diarrhoea is improved, but hi is still suffering from loose stools and his vitality is back to 60% of his "old" vitality.

Supplementation Schedule: Started in April with Coriolus-MRL six (6 tablets per day (3 grams) for 15 days and then three tablets per day.

Observation 1-August 31st, 2000

Patient G feels stonger, more energetic and for four weeks he did not have loose stools. At the end of this period he got chlamydia and he had to take drugs. After that his loose stools started again, but now begining of October, this too has improved.

Observation 2-February 10th, 2001

At the end of October, Patient G got prostatitis, which was treated by his medical doctor with antibiotics. After this he suffered from loose stools again. He started working in this period again and had a lot of frustration. He had a drop in his energy around this time and he go a Herpes Zoster infection on the TH5, but he recovered quickly in a week. Now in February he feels energetic again, he decided to continue his work part-time. His liver enzymes improved.

Patient G	April	August	December
Viral Load	22000	15000	8300
CD-4	450	540	590
Count			

H Patient H (Male, 50 years old) 16 years HIV positive. He has been on all the medication which has been used to treat HIV+ patients over the past 12 years. **He had to stop his last combination therapy in February. Even with the HAART therapy his viral load was 125,000 and CD4 cells 60. In March, one month after quitting HAART therapy, he ad 20 CD-4 cell**

count and his viral load was 300,000. He had all the opportunistic infections and more or less all the side-effects of the HAART therapy. Basically, Patient A was more or less a terminal patient and I started working with acupuncture and Chinese herbs on him since March 2000.

Supplementation Schedule: Started in April to combine acupuncture and Chinese herbs with Coriolus-MRL six (6 tablets per day (3 grams). **Due to his serious condition, the supplementation schedule was maintained at 6 tablets per day.**

Observation-1- -May 21st, 2000- His neuropathy is slowly improving and he is able to walk every day half an hour outside his house, with the help of a walking stand. His diarrhoea due to a cryptosporidium infection has improved to loose stools and his candidiasis is not bothering him so much. He sleeps better and his mental depression is reduced. His weight improved from 40 to 42 kilos. His viral load has dropped from 300000 to 92000.

Observation 2-July 15th, 2000-Patient H's viral load has decreased to 35,000 and his CD-4 count has increased to 70.

Observation 3-September 30th, 2000-

In September, Patient H's viral load has decreased to 20,000, with his CD-4 increasing to 100. His weight improved to 45 kilos. Patient H feels stronger, less tired and his mental depression is gone. He is still suffering from loose stools. He walks every day, 45 minutes but his neuropathy is still the same, which is slightly better than the beginning, but it is still bothering him.

Observation 4-February 10th, 2001

Patient H's weight is still improving up to 50 kilos. He feels stronger every month, he is less tired and his mental depression is gone. He is sometimes still suffering from loose stools, but this maybe once a week, instead of three times a day. His neuropathy is slowly improving and he started going to the gym 3 x a week.

Patient H	February	March	May	July	September	December
Viral Load	125000	300000	92000	35000	20000	12000
CD-4	60	20	20	70	100	80
Count						
	In last month	Four weeks	Commences			
	of HAART	after ceasing	Coriolus-MRL			
	Therapy	HAART	with Chinese herbs			
		Therapy	and acupuncture			

Conclusions:

1. For HIV+ patients (non-HAART), along with acupuncture and herbal formulations, I would suggest Coriolus-MRL supplementation of 6 tablets per day (3 tablets in morning and 3 tablets in evening (30 minutes before meals)) for 15 days, followed by 3 tablets in the morning for twelve (12) months.
2. For HIV+ patients (post-HAART), along with acupuncture and herbal formulations, I would suggest Coriolus-MRL supplementation of 6 tablets per day (3 tablets in morning and 3 tablets in evening (30 minutes before meals)) for twelve (12) months.
3. If during Coriolus-MRL supplementation the patient requires antibiotic treatment for acute infections, then Coriolus-MRL supplementation should be immediately suspended, and resumed only after the completion of the antibiotic treatment.
4. Given Patient F's reversal of PAP smear test results over a twelve month period, further research in the use of Coriolus-MRL supplementation in HPV infection should be considered.