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AMBOVEX ORAL SUBLINGUAL SPRAY AS IMMUNO-THERAPY TRIAL FOR HCC AMONG EGYPTIAN PATIENTS

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Introduction: Novel immunotherapy strategies that may be employed to render a cancer more immunogenic, generate antigen-specific or nonspecific immune activation, and/or manipulate the tumor micro-environment. A number of immunotherapeutic trials have been performed to evaluate the efficacy of immunotherapy for the treatment of HCC (hepatocellular carcinoma). Ambovex is a botanical medicine derived from the plants belonging to the family Ranunculaceae and having immune-modulating effect. In this pilot study we used Ambovex as an immunotherapy trial for treating Egyptian patients with unresectable HCC.

Patients & Methodology: We included 148 patients with post-HCV liver cirrhosis and HCC. Their HCC was diagnosed by Ultrasound/CT and AFP >400 ngm and was unfit for any of the available treatment modalities. They were divided into 2 groups: group 1 (88 patients) for treatment and group 2 (60 patients) as a control group. After getting their informal consent, we gave for group 1 Ambovex sublingual oral spray (20 buffs sublingual tid) for 4 months. For group 2, sub- lingual glucose-saline sublingual spray as a placebo. Both groups were followed up for one year.

Results: There were no side effects apart from taste changes in 25% of patients in group I. In group I there was tumor regression and significant decrease in AFP in 36 patients (40.9%), and 25 patients (28.4%) showed stable tumor size and AFP level and 27 patients (30.7%) showed disease progression. In group II, no patients showed tumor stabilization. At one year follow-up 61 patients (69.3%) were still living in group I compared to only 21 patients (35%) in group II.

Conclusions: From this pilot study, we could conclude that Ambovex with its immune- modulating effect have initial promising results in treating Egyptian patients with HCC. Further controlled, randomized, multicenter studies are needed to confirm these results.

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