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NKT activation by Japanese Herbal Medicine, Kampo in Mice

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Introduction; The Kampo, Japanese herbal medicines were first described and established in old China and introduced into Japan. They have been administrated mainly to patients weakened by long illness and also have been used for cancer patients to expect for these anti-tumor effects. Although these effects have been reported in many studies in Japan, the mechanisms of them are not defined. In this study, we examined the effect of these Kampo drugs in mice on the immunological reaction in liver.

Methods; Grouped mice have been administrated with or without the Kampo agents, Juzen-Taiho-To (JTT) and Shi-Kunshi-To intra-peritoneum process. After sacrificed, the liver tissue was fixed, embedded and stained with H-E and anti IL-12, IL-18, and TCR antibody by common staining methods and observed. The m-RNA expression was evaluated by in situ hybridization method and RT-PCR.

Results; Although the mice received the herbal medicine showed same appearance compared with control mice, these liver were infiltrated massive mononuclear cells, some of which were aggregated to the clusters. Immuno-histochemical staining indicated that there was elevated cytokine expression on the liver of JTT received mice and these messages were also up-regulated.

Discussion; JTT may induce the NKT activation in mice liver.