

DEVELOPING A QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TRADITIONAL CHINESE MEDICINE  
PATTERN DIAGNOSIS FOR ACUPUNCTURE CLINICAL TRIALS  
IN RADIATION PROSTATITIS

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## ABSTRACT

Background: Research design in acupuncture clinical trials is still in the beginning stages, and the criteria necessary for broad acceptance in both the Eastern and Western medical models are currently being formed. One of the most important and under-addressed issues in this area of research is the lack of study designs that include Traditionally Based Systems of Acupuncture (TBSA), a system that formulates an individualized treatment based on each patient's unique presentations. It is a great methodological challenge to design and test treatment protocols that allow both the standardization necessary for replication and the flexibility essential in treating individuals.

Objectives: In order to improve the reliability and efficacy of acupuncture clinical trials and to allow for both standardization and individualization, the development of a research instrument based on TBSA is necessary. The particular instrument for this study—a questionnaire—will be specifically designed for use in acupuncture clinical trials involving patients suffering from radiation-induced prostatitis. The information from this questionnaire will be used to create a treatment protocol that includes an accepted Chinese medicine diagnosis and an acupuncture point prescription.

Methods: The initial questionnaire was designed using previously validated Western medicine questionnaires for prostate health, previously validated Health Related Quality of Life (HRQOL) questionnaires for radiation prostatitis, and

validated Chinese medicine literature. The common symptoms identified by Western medicine for radiation prostatitis were correlated to traditional imbalances identified by Chinese medicine. Questions were developed based on these correlations; questions were also included to aid in identifying specific patterns of imbalance in Chinese medicine. Using a modified Delphi Method, the questionnaire was then rigorously evaluated and confirmed by a panel of four experts for content validity.

Findings: The questionnaire was developed and will be of benefit to patients recovering from radiation prostates because:

1. A focused acupuncture prescription can effectively resolve many of the side-effects associated with radiation treatment.
2. It allows the acupuncture treatment to be replicated with the flexibility needed to provide a true TCM treatment.

Keywords: Prostatitis, Radiation, Acupuncture, TCM Patterns, Acupuncture point prescriptions.