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### Treatment of posttraumatic stress disorder using the traditional Japanese herbal medicine Saikokeishikankyoto: A randomized, observer-blinded controlled trial in survivors of the great east Japan earthquake and tsunami

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**Objective:** The Great East Japan earthquake and tsunami caused immense damage over a wide area of eastern Japan and left 20,000 people either dead or missing. Destruction of the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant has prevented over 10,000 people from returning to their hometown. Hence, many survivors are at high risk for posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD). This randomized, observer-blinded, controlled trial examined the efficacy and safety of the traditional Japanese herbal formula saikokeishikankyoto (SKK) on PTSD in survivors of this disaster.

**Methods:** Forty-three participants with an Impact of Event Scale-Revised (IES-R) score over 25 were randomized into the SKK treatment (n=21) and control (n=22) groups. Change in IES-R scores between baseline and after 2 weeks of treatment was the primary endpoint. Adverse events were monitored by blood and physical examination.

**Results:** The total IES-R score improved significantly in the SKK group ( $49.6 \pm 11.9$  vs.  $25.5 \pm 17.0$ ). The avoidance ( $p=0.025$ ) and intrusion ( $p<0.001$ ) subscale scores also improved. Significant intergroup differences were observed for answers to the following items: "Any reminder brought back feelings about it." (Q1,  $p=0.031$ ); "Other things kept making me think about it." (Q3,  $p=0.003$ ); "I found myself acting or feeling like I was back at that time." (Q14,  $p=0.02$ ); "I had dreams about it." (Q20,  $p=0.001$ ); and "I felt watchful and on-guard." (Q21,  $p=0.002$ ).

**Conclusion:** SKK significantly improved IES-R scores after 2 weeks of treatment. This traditional medicine may be a treatment choice for psychological and physical symptoms in PTSD patients.

#### Biography

Koh Iwasaki has completed his PhD at the age of 30 years from Tohoku University and postdoctoral studies from Division of Geriatrics in Tohoku University and Division of Geriatrics in University of Tokyo. He is the director of Center for Traditional Asian Medicine and Home Healthcare, Southern TOHOKU General Hospital. He has published 34 papers in reputed journals (impact factor 101) and serving as an editorial board member of Kampo Medicine (Journal of Traditional Japanese Medicine).

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