

Artemisia Annua

Heezen, Noah

Heezen, Emma

Common cancer treatments may seem almost as hazardous as cancer itself. Most people who undergo radiation and/or chemotherapy report physical side effects, including shortness of breath, uncontrolled pain, nausea, and loss of appetite. Some people are even too weak to undergo chemo treatments or radiation. Artemisia annua, otherwise known as sweet wormwood, is a natural herb originating in China. The Chinese commonly use this herb as a treatment for the common cold and stomach flu as it is an anti-bacterial and anti-fungal agent. Because of its anti-inflammatory properties, we thought sweet wormwood could be used as a viable treatment for cancer. We treated B35 rat neuroblastoma cells with wormwood and iron, which is thought to potentiate the effects of the Artemisia annua. This combination was cytotoxic to neuroblastoma cells. The average lethal concentration (LC50) we determined for these cells was .015 mg/mL iron and 0.01 mg/mL wormwood. These concentrations are low compared to accepted therapeutic dosages of these compounds. Our results indicate that Artemisia annua combined with iron has the potential to be a treatment for cancer.