

Health

# Study: New drug therapy slows the spread of pancreatic cancer

CHICAGO: For people diagnosed with advanced pancreatic cancer, the outlook is about as grim as it gets: the average patient won't live longer than a year. But a new study involving a targeted drug therapy has demonstrated it may be possible to significantly slow its spread, with a third of patients receiving the medication still alive two years into a clinical trial, a researcher reported on Sunday.

The trial specifically looked at patients with BRCA gene mutations which are inherited and are known to increase the chances of getting pancreatic, ovarian, prostate and breast cancer — the reason why actress Angelina Jolie had a preventative double mastectomy. The mutation affects the body's ability to repair damaged DNA, which can result from a number of factors ranging from excess sunlight to exposure to asbestos.

"Normal cells may be able to repair it, but cells that have the mutation cannot repair this damage, and they then start to grow abnormally because they have damage in their DNA," lead author Hedy Kindler, an oncologist at the University of Chicago Medical Center, told AFP. Enter

so-called "PARP inhibitors" which act somewhat counter-intuitively by blocking a protein, PARP, that helps damaged cells repair themselves.

Since cancer cells with BRCA gene defects already have a poor repair system, targeting them using a PARP inhibitor worsens the damage and ultimately kills them. The trial screened more than 3,300 people with pancreatic cancer, identifying around 250 with the faulty gene. They then randomly assigned the drug, known as olaparib, to a portion of them and a placebo to another group. Olaparib, which is sold by Merck as "Lynparza," was found to reduce the risk of disease progression by 47 percent compared to the control group. Those patients who received olaparib had their disease under control for almost twice as long (7.4 months to 3.8 months) as those patients who received the placebo — a measure known as "median progression-free survival."

**Tumor shrinkage**

"Those patients whose tumor shrank with the olaparib, which was about a quarter of them, their tumor shrinkage was

maintained for more than two years," added Kindler, who presented the findings at the annual meeting of the American Society of Clinical Oncology. "The whole idea is... you can transform an otherwise deadly prognosis into a potentially chronic disease, at least for a while, and to keep it under control."

Suzanne Cole, an oncologist at Southwestern Medical Center who was not involved with the study said it represented a "huge step forward for patients with metastatic pancreatic cancer." She added that now the effectiveness of the medication had been identified, it was important for clinicians to screen patients for the mutation to identify those who could benefit from the therapy.

Kindler cited the case of a patient who watched his brother die from the disease before learning he himself had the cancer. He was found to have the BRCA mutation and placed on the trial. "Every single time we do a CT scan, his tumor is smaller and smaller," said Kindler. "He takes a pill twice a day, and two and a half years later, he's still around. He's leading a normal life." — AFP

## Obamacare led to better cancer outcomes: Studies

CHICAGO: A pair of studies has found that Obamacare led to an increase in early-stage ovarian cancer detections and helped nearly erase racial differences in the timely treatment of a range of cancers. The findings were presented Sunday and come as the administration of President Donald Trump is renewing its efforts to strike down the Affordable Care Act signed into law by his predecessor Barack Obama.

Both papers were presented at the annual meeting of the American Society of Clinical Oncology in Chicago. The study on ovarian cancer screening was led by Anna Jo Smith at the Johns Hopkins Department of Gynecology and Obstetrics in Baltimore. "Having health insurance plays a major role in whether or not a woman has access to care providers who can monitor symptoms and act on those symptoms if necessary,"

she said in a statement. The five-year survival rate for women diagnosed with early-stage ovarian cancer is 75 percent, but the figure drops dramatically to 30 percent for those diagnosed at a later stage. The ACA was signed into law on March 2010, and by 2016-17, some 12.7 million people were covered under the law. The percentage of Americans who were uninsured dropped from 16 percent in 2010 to less than 12 percent by 2016. The researchers used data from the National Cancer Database to look at the years before (2004-2009) and after (2011-2014) the passing of the ACA.

They looked at the stage of the diagnosis and the time to treatment for the 21 to 64 age group, and compared it to those 65 and older, which was used as a control group because they had access to publicly funded Medicare before and after. They found that there was a relative gain of 1.7 percent in early-stage diagnosis and a 1.6 percent improvement in receiving treatment within 30 days. While the difference may not sound very large, "For the 22,000 women diagnosed with ovarian cancer in the United States annually, it means that close to 400 more women could be diagnosed at an early, treatable stage," the team said. — AFP

CLINIC  
PAGE





248 33 199

CLINIC  
PAGE



248 33 199



**Dr. Rany Essam Mitwally**  
Senior Registrar



**Dr. Ahmed Hosni Abd Elhamid**  
Consultant



**Dr. Abeer Khattab**  
Specialist



Cataract Surgery



Glaucoma



Retina



General Ophthalmology



Follow-Up All Treatments

Follow us on Social Media @haddclinickw

Tel: 1801082  
Whatsapp Us +965-6000 2184

## Dr Sahar Ghannam

Dermatology consultant, skin treatment and laser

**Timing: Saturdays to Wednesdays from 9 am to 1 pm**  
**and from 8 pm to 12 pm**  
**Thursday from 9:30 am until 1 pm**

**Friday is a holiday.**

**Address: Fourth Ring Road - Abdallah Fadalah Street, Meidan Hawally, opposite fire station - block 35, building 31.**

Clinic Phones: 25610407/ 409/ 314 Fax: 25610465  
Mobile: 90974754/ 99166746

 saharpolyclinic
 Dr.saharghannamsclinic
 Email: drsgderma@gmail.com

WELCOME

Dr Tammam Abou Ali

Consultant ENT, Head Neck, Facial Plastic Surgeon

Fellowship of the royal college of surgeons in UK and Ireland.  
18 years work experience in Qatar Hospital WJH Qatar.

Ex Head of ENT department in Forensic Hospital WJH Qatar.  
18 years work experience in UK and Ireland.

- Endoscopic Sinus Surgery
- Septoplasty and turbinate reduction surgery by laser or RF
- Snoring and OSAP Surgery
- Rhinoplasty with open and closed techniques
- Microscopic Middle Ear Surgery and Tympanoplasty
- Salivary gland and parotid surgery
- Thyroid and parathyroid surgery
- Micro laryngeal surgery



1 888 883

www.qmc-kuwait.com



qmckuwait



Call: 24833199 ext:101,102 or

Direct line: 24835616 / 24835617

or email: ads@kuwaittimes.com

Dr. Husain Alenezi

-Board Certified Urologist.  
-Endourology Society-Approved Fellowship In Endourology And Robotic Surgery At Western University, Ontario, Canada.

Expert in diagnosing and treating:

- 1- Urinary Stones (Kidney, Ureter & Bladder) By Endoscopy & Laser
- 2- Prostate Cancer And Benign Prostatic Hyperplasia
- 3- Lower Urinary Tract Symptoms In Males And Females
- 4- Tumors And Malignancies Of The Urinary Tract (Kidney, Adrenals, Ureter, Bladder And Testes)
- 5- Male Factor Infertility And Varicoceles (Microscopic Surgery)
- 6- Erectile Dysfunction



Contact Taiba Hospital: 1808088

94449452

Twitter: @DrHusain\_Urol

Our Doctors Provide care For the entire Family

Book your appointments today!





Dr. Kiran Turak  
Ophthalmologist



Dr. Zareena Zahir  
Ophthalmologist



Dr. Hasan Khan  
Senior Cardiologist



Dr. P. Seshendra Nath  
Orthopedic Consultant (ASSETRA)  
Specialized in Neck, Shoulder, Hip and Knee

50721507  
24551555

www.exircenterkw.com

EXIR MEDICAL SUBSPECIALITIES CENTER

Block No.4 Jahra - Kuwait

WE ACCEPT ALL MAJOR INSURANCES

Tel : 24568857 / 24568859 info@exircenterkw.com www.exircenterkw.com

