

Boosting the body's innate cancer immunity

The focus on immunotherapy puts us at risk for forgetting that the principal role of the immune system is tumor surveillance: the elimination of developing diseases before we are even aware of the danger. Cancer arises from the uncontrolled growth of tumor cells, which have evaded immune surveillance, and as such, immunotherapies are aimed at restoring the body's natural anti-cancer responses. Nonetheless, despite some groundbreaking results, current immunotherapies remain effective in only [a minority of patients](#).

The reason is that most such therapies only target one of two sides of the immune system; the adaptive response, and not the innate response. However, many immunotherapists are beginning to understand that broadening our therapeutic options to target the innate response as well, will give patients the best chance of beating their disease.

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In contrast to the adaptive immunity's antigen-specific T cell responses, the innate system is relatively nonspecific and can provide a rapid response. While some of the earliest cellular immunotherapy trials in cancer were directed at innate immunity, many believed that the innate response is inadequate for the control of cancer and instead redirected therapies to focus on the T cell-mediated "adaptive" immunity.

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Far from being the poor, unsophisticated relative of the adaptive immune response, innate immunity is central to survival.

Read full, original post: [Are We Innately Immune to Cancer?](#)