

Immunotherapy could extend survival for patients with aggressive glioblastoma brain cancer

Glioblastoma — the aggressive brain cancer that killed Sen. [John McCain](#), Sen. Ted Kennedy and [Beau Biden](#), son of Vice President Joe Biden — is among the deadliest of cancers, with a three-year survival rate of just 10 percent. But, in a glimmer of hope, a study published [February 11] found that a drug designed to unleash the immune system helped some patients live longer.

The small, multisite trial led by researchers at the University of California at Los Angeles involved patients who had a recurrence of glioblastoma, the most common central nervous system cancer. It found that patients who received a drug called a checkpoint inhibitor before surgery lived for 417 days. Those who got the treatment after surgery survived 228 days, the current life expectancy for recurrent glioblastoma.

The study marked the first time this kind of immune-system treatment showed any benefit in glioblastoma patients, the researchers said.

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UCLA immunologist Robert Prins, senior author of the [study published in Nature Medicine](#), said the results are “very encouraging” and will help researchers design better treatments using combinations such as checkpoint inhibitors and personalized cancer vaccines.

Read full, original post: [Immunotherapy may help patients with the kind of cancer that killed John McCain](#)