

## China revives discredited ‘malarial therapy’ as cancer treatment

American surgeon [Henry Heimlich](#) is best known for inventing a way to rescue choking victims, but a quarter-century ago, he was vilified for promoting a fringe treatment for AIDS and Lyme disease. Called malarial therapy, it involved injecting patients with the malaria-causing parasite, supposedly to stimulate their immune systems.

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention issued a report saying the procedure “[cannot be justified](#),” and another critic compared its use to the discredited practice of bleeding patients with leeches. Despite the criticism, Heimlich launched trials of the therapy in HIV patients in Mexico and China in the 1990s. Now, the scientist who led the Chinese study is using malarial therapy again — this time to treat cancer patients. And the still-unproven intervention is being hailed in China as a miracle cure.

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China is eager to compete with Western nations and companies pursuing treatments designed to rev up a patient’s immune system to attack tumors. But critics say the malarial therapy trial shows the government-sponsored effort has spawned a feverish medical gold rush to develop and profit from these treatments. Nearly 70 registered immunotherapy clinical trials are underway in China.

**Read full, original post:** [An AIDS therapy involving parasite injections was discredited. China is reviving it — for cancer](#)