

Drug cocktail shows promise against pancreatic cancer, highlighting potential of combined treatments

Researchers led by a team at Sanford Burnham Prebys Medical Discovery Institute have identified a combination of two already approved anticancer compounds that can significantly shrink [pancreatic](#) tumors and melanoma tumors in mice.

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For their study, the scientists first used a drug called L-asparaginase (L-Aase) to starve pancreatic tumors of asparagine (L-Asn). However, they found that instead of dying, the tumor turned on the MAPK stress response pathway that allowed the cancer cells to produce asparagine from scratch. The scientists then treated mice with a second drug, an MEK inhibitor (MEKi), which blocked the stress response pathway. This dual approach effectively shrank the pancreatic tumors. L-asparaginase is already approved by the FDA to treat certain leukemias, and the MEK inhibitor is approved for the treatment of solid tumors, including melanoma.

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Rosalie C. Sears, PhD, a professor at Oregon Health & Science University, added: "It's clear we're not going to find a single magic bullet that cures cancer but will instead need several drugs that target multiple vulnerabilities. This study identifies a promising dual treatment for [pancreatic cancer](#)—one of the deadliest cancers—and I look forward to seeing these drugs tested in patients."

Read full, original post: [Pancreatic Tumors Succumb to Combination of Two Approved Drugs](#)