

Melanoma treatment options one step closer

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A targeted chemotherapy for the treatment of skin cancer is one step closer, after a team of University of Alberta researchers successfully synthesized a natural substance that shows exceptional potential to specifically treat this often fatal disease.

U of A chemistry professor Dennis Hall said after three years of work, his research team has successfully produced the substance called Palmerolide A.

"The potency of palmerolide is exceptional and melanoma is a very [aggressive cancer](#) for which there is almost no chemotherapeutic recourse," said Hall. "Natural substances like palmerolide offer real hope for such treatments.

"Current [chemotherapy](#) as an overall strategy is not very effective in treating melanoma. Less than a quarter of patients respond to chemotherapy and it typically only works for less than a year, and it has little to no effect on survival time. Palmerolide A as a targeted therapy may prove to be more effective [for treatment] with less toxicity," said Hall.

"One of the problems with most cancer drugs is the lack of selectivity for cancer cells versus normal cells. Preliminary data for Palmerolide A looks very promising in terms of solving this issue," he said.

"For commercialization, the structure needs to be made more 'drug-like;' smaller and more water-soluble, while preserving the potency," said Hall,

who is optimistic that his U of A team is moving forward in the race to develop a treatment for [melanoma](#).

More information: Hall's research findings were recently published in the [Journal of the American Chemical Society](#).

Source: University of Alberta ([news](#) : [web](#))

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