

# Anti-estrogens may offer protection against lung cancer mortality

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Anti-estrogens as therapy for breast cancer may also reduce the risk of death from lung cancer, according to study results presented at the CTRC-AACR San Antonio Breast Cancer Symposium, held here Dec. 9-13, 2009.

"We found a reduction in lung cancer mortality among [women](#) treated with anti-estrogens for breast cancer. This work builds on previous studies that had suggested estrogens have a role in lung [cancer development](#) and progression," said Elisabetta Rapiti, M.D., M.P.H., medical researcher with the Geneva Cancer Registry, University of Geneva, Switzerland.

Rapiti and colleagues evaluated whether anti-estrogen [therapy](#) for breast cancer patients reduced their risk of subsequently developing and/or dying from lung cancer.

The study included 6,715 women living in the Geneva canton of Switzerland who were diagnosed with [breast cancer](#), between 1980 and 2003. Forty-six percent of the women received anti-estrogen therapy, primarily tamoxifen.

By the end of the study period, 40 cases of lung cancer developed. There was no difference in the incidence of lung cancer among women with or without anti-estrogens compared with the general population. However, the risk of dying from lung cancer was significantly lower among women who received anti-estrogen therapy.

"Our results are particularly relevant to the research agenda exploring endocrine treatment(s) for lung cancer," said Rapiti. "If prospective studies confirm our results and find that anti-estrogen agents improve lung cancer outcomes, this could have substantial implications for clinical practice."

Phase II clinical trials are currently underway in a number of centers to evaluate the use of anti-hormone therapy as an adjunct to traditional chemotherapy for [lung cancer](#), according to Rapiti.

Source: American Association for Cancer Research ([news](#) : [web](#))

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