

Effort aims to spike breast cancer with new approach

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Many women live with breast cancer that does not respond to standard medical treatment, a condition that researchers at the Virginia G. Piper Cancer Center at Scottsdale Healthcare want to change by aggressively targeting specific genes.

Improving quality of life and potentially keeping the cancer under control for a longer period of time are goals of a new clinical trial at the cancer center's TGen Clinical Research Services, a partnership of Scottsdale Healthcare and the Translational Genomics Research Institute (TGen).

The pilot study is supported by the Side-Out Foundation, a group founded by volleyball enthusiasts to help wage war on [breast cancer](#).

Women or men with advanced breast cancer that has progressed through three prior treatments are eligible for the trial, available in the western U.S. only at Scottsdale Healthcare's Virginia G. Piper Cancer Center.

“Many are living with refractory, or advanced, breast cancer that has not responded or continues to grow despite standard treatments,” explains Nurse Practitioner Gayle Jameson, principal investigator. “What we are offering here is a whole new approach for treating patients with refractory breast cancer.”

Biopsied tissue will be analyzed for unique characteristics and abnormal genes in [cancer cells](#), which are then targeted for treatment with FDA-

approved anticancer medications. “We may discover that a tumor has a [gene mutation](#) that responds to a drug not typically used in a ‘one-size-fits-all’ approach,” explains Jameson.

“What we are doing here is precisely matching a treatment to a specific type of cancer cell mutation and abnormal protein signaling pathways that may activate cancer cell growth. The patient would then be treated with one or more medications based on the information provided by the analyses.”

Researchers call the Side-Out study the “next generation of breast cancer treatment,” expanding on what was learned about molecular profiling in an earlier clinical trial at the Virginia G. Piper Cancer Center. The new study, managed by TGen Drug Development (TD2), is open to a total of 25 patients at only two sites, the Virginia G. Piper Cancer Center at Scottsdale Healthcare and Fairfax Northern Virginia Hematology Oncology.

Results of the earlier trial, known as the Bisgrove Study, showed that molecular profiling can identify specific treatments that help keep cancer in check for significantly longer periods, and in some cases even shrinking tumors. Clinical trials at the cancer center are administered by the Scottsdale Healthcare Research Institute.

Research at the Virginia G. Piper [Cancer](#) Center at Scottsdale Healthcare allows molecular and genomic discoveries to reach the patient bedside as quickly as possible through clinical trials of therapies directed at specific targets in patients’ tumors.

Provided by TGen

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