

Novel clinical trial aims to reduce recurrence of aggressive breast cancer

March 8 2011

In a first-of-its-kind clinical trial, physician-scientists at University Hospitals (UH) Case Medical Center are exploring a new method to potentially prevent recurrence of an early stage, aggressive type of breast cancer. The pilot study, conducted by Joe Baar, MD, Director of Breast Cancer Research at UH Case Medical Center's Seidman Cancer Center, is recruiting patients with HER-2 neu+ breast cancer.

Patients with this form of [breast cancer](#) typically have a higher recurrence rate of nearly 25% following initial treatment. This novel study aims to improve outcomes through performing bone marrow biopsies to identify if patients' cancer has spread and adding an additional cancer-targeting drug to standard therapy.

"This study has the potential to change the standard of care for women with this type of breast cancer, which tends to spread very quickly," says Dr. Baar, who is also Associate Professor of Medicine at Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine. "A small number of HER-2 neu+ breast cancer patients do not do well following standard therapy. We are hoping to identify these high-risk patients and stop the cancer before it progresses to other parts of the body."

Traditional imaging, such as CT scans and bone scans, does not detect these microscopic metastases, which are small numbers of [cancer cells](#) that have spread from the breast to other areas of the body such as the bone marrow. Therefore, patients who are found to have such micrometastases in the bone marrow will receive the cancer-fighting

drug Bevacizumab (Avastin) to rid the bone marrow of the micrometastases. The study is funded by Genentech through University Hospitals Case Medical Center.

"This important trial has the potential to really help this subset of women with HER-2 neu+ breast cancer who have a high rate of recurrence," says Stanton Gerson, MD, Director of the UH Seidman Cancer Center and the Case Comprehensive Cancer Center. "This innovative trial has the potential to lay the groundwork for a new standard of care for women with this aggressive form of breast cancer."

Provided by University Hospitals Case Medical Center

Citation: Novel clinical trial aims to reduce recurrence of aggressive breast cancer (2011, March 8) retrieved 4 May 2024 from

<https://medicalxpress.com/news/2011-03-clinical-trial-aims-recurrence-aggressive.html>

<p>This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.</p>
--