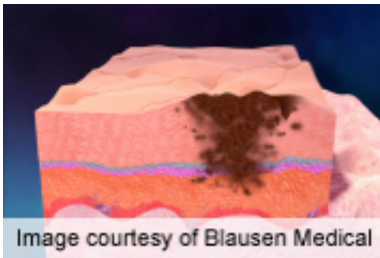


# Immunosuppressant switch cuts skin cancer post-transplant

July 26 2012

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In kidney-transplant patients with at least one cutaneous squamous-cell carcinoma, switching immunosuppressants (from calcineurin inhibitors to sirolimus) is associated with increased skin cancer-free survival and delayed development of new skin cancers, according to a study published in the July 26 issue of the *New England Journal of Medicine*.

(HealthDay) -- In kidney-transplant patients with at least one cutaneous squamous-cell carcinoma, switching immunosuppressants (from calcineurin inhibitors to sirolimus) is associated with increased skin cancer-free survival and delayed development of new skin cancers, according to a study published in the July 26 issue of the *New England Journal of Medicine*.

Sylvie Euvrard, M.D., from the Edouard Herriot Hospital Group in Lyon, France, and colleagues randomly assigned 120 kidney-transplant recipients who were receiving [calcineurin inhibitors](#) and had at least one cutaneous squamous-cell carcinoma to continue receiving calcineurin

inhibitors (56 patients) or transition to [sirolimus](#) (64 patients).

At two years, the researchers found that the sirolimus group had significantly longer survival free of cutaneous squamous-cell carcinoma. New cutaneous squamous-cell carcinomas developed in fewer patients taking sirolimus (22 versus 39 percent; relative risk 0.56) and after a significantly longer median interval (15 versus seven months). [Serious adverse events](#) were more frequent in the sirolimus group, and these were twice as frequent in patients converted to sirolimus with rapid protocols compared with progressive protocols. Twenty-three percent of patients discontinued sirolimus due to adverse events. There were no graft rejections noted.

"In conclusion, in this study involving kidney-transplant recipients with at least one previous cutaneous squamous-cell carcinoma, conversion from calcineurin inhibitors to sirolimus was associated with a lower risk of subsequent skin cancers," Euvrard and colleagues write.

The study was partially funded by Pfizer; several authors disclosed financial ties to pharmaceutical companies, including Pfizer.

**More information:** [Full Text \(subscription or payment may be required\)](#)

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