

UC Irvine opens clinical trial of novel treatment for brain cancer

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UC Irvine doctors are enrolling patients with the deadly brain tumor glioblastoma multiforme in a clinical trial of a vaccine that may prevent the cancer's return or spread after surgery.

"Our goal is to train the immune system to recognize and attack the cancer," said Dr. Daniela Bota, neuro-oncologist and co-director of UC Irvine's Comprehensive Brain Tumor Program. She will lead the Phase II trial at UC Irvine of DCVax, which was associated with increased survival in a previous study.

The vaccine is prepared in a lab and combines protein antigens extracted from the patient's tumor with some of his or her [white blood cells](#). These grow into dendritic cells that, when injected back into the patient, target the [protein antigens](#) and prompt the immune system's T cells to identify and attack remaining [cancer cells](#).

"Cancer cells are like crabgrass: Once they take root, they're hard to eradicate, even after brain surgery," Bota said. The current treatment for patients with glioblastoma multiforme involves surgery to remove as much of the tumor as possible, followed by radiation and chemotherapy.

"The standard of care prolongs survival, but it does not fully destroy the cancer," Bota said. She believes the vaccine can help eliminate remaining [tumor cells](#) and further extend patients' lives. Only 10 percent of the 12,000 to 14,000 people annually found to have glioblastoma multiforme survive five years.

Patients 18 to 70 newly diagnosed with this brain tumor (also called grade IV astrocytoma) may be eligible to enroll in the trial. For more information, call UC Irvine toll-free at 877-UCSTUDY (877-827-8839) or email ucstudy@uci.edu. Please refer to protocol UCI-08-16.

More information: Additional information also is available at clinicaltrials.gov/show/NCT00045968

Provided by University of California, Irvine

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