

Kidney cancer care improves with vaccine-based approach

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The Cedars-Sinai Samuel Oschin Comprehensive Cancer Institute has opened a novel Phase III, vaccine-based clinical trial aimed at providing kidney cancer patients long-term control of their disease.

Survival outcomes for patients with [renal cell carcinoma](#), the most common form of [kidney cancer](#), have improved significantly over the past decade due to research advances in personalized or "targeted" therapies designed to target an individual's genetic makeup. To expedite these benefits, investigators are now looking to couple targeted therapies with vaccine-based approaches, which use a patient's own immune system to fight disease and may have the potential to improve [survival outcomes](#) and overall quality of life.

In "Ask the Author: Drug Evaluation," an article published in the journal *Immunotherapy*, Robert Figlin, MD, deputy director of the Samuel Oschin Comprehensive Cancer Institute and global principal investigator of the Phase III clinical trial, explains that combining targeted therapies with a vaccine-based approach may revolutionize the treatment of renal cell carcinoma through the next decade.

"Translational research efforts in advanced renal cell carcinoma are providing the best hope and the strongest outcomes for patients," said Figlin, the Steven Spielberg Family Chair in Hematology Oncology.

"With innovative thinking and treatment approaches, and learning from past progress, we are paving the way for promising research advancements and improved patient care."

To further test the outcomes of combining a vaccine-based approach with targeted therapies, Cedars-Sinai is enrolling patients in the clinical trial using an investigational vaccine known as AGS-003. This trial acts in combination with the targeted therapy Sunitinib to maximize an immune response in [patients](#), with a goal of adding little to no toxicity.

"This clinical trial asks one of the most important questions facing the field of kidney cancer at this time: Is there synergy between immunotherapy and targeted agents?" said Edwin Posadas, MD, co-investigator of the clinical trial, medical director of the Urologic Oncology Program at the Cedars-Sinai Samuel Oschin Comprehensive Cancer Institute and associate professor in the Department of Medicine. "This study could be the first of many to truly redefine the approach investigators take to treat kidney cancer in the clinic."

More information: *Immunotherapy*. 2013 December: A novel personalized vaccine approach in combination with targeted therapy in advanced renal cell carcinoma.

Provided by Cedars-Sinai Medical Center

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