

New cancer drug shows promise in first trial outside the US

March 10 2014, by Alison Barbuti

(Medical Xpress)—A cancer patient from Bolton with a rare form of Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma is in remission after becoming the first person outside of the US to trial a new cancer drug, Brentuximab Vedotin, led by University of Manchester Professor at The Christie Hospital in Manchester.

Ian Brooks was first diagnosed with Anaplastic Large Cell Lymphoma, a rare and aggressive form of Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma, in 2001 and despite an initial positive response to treatment the [cancer](#) returned in 2008.

He underwent a [stem cell transplant](#), but the cancer came back again and spread throughout his body.

With few options remaining, and given just weeks to live he volunteered to take part in the trial for the [drug](#) Brentuximab Vedotin.

Within just 24 hours of starting the drug, Mr Brooks began to show improvements and after just two weeks his consultants at The Christie Hospital were amazed to see his scan showed he was clear of tumours.

The drug acts like an 'armour piercing shell' and destroys cells from the inside, puts patients into 'deep remission' when there would otherwise be few treatment options available to them.

Professor Tim Illidge, Professor of Targeted Therapy and Oncology in

the Institute of Cancer Studies, who led the trial noted: "Brentuximab has a remarkably novel mode of action which bodes well for future [cancer treatment](#). The antibody is combined with an anti-cancer drug called Vedotin, so powerful that it cannot be used in standard chemotherapy.

"The antibody targets the protein on the cancer cell, called CD30, and then it delivers Vedotin straight to the tumour."

Mr Brooks said: "I don't think I would be here today without that drug. My specialist at the hospital was so excited when he saw the results that he came and showed me the results straight away. I had 60 or 70 tumours and they had gone.

"I can't thank the NHS and the hospital enough for what they have done for me. Everybody has been wonderful. Hopefully my taking part in this trial will help other people."

The trial at The Christie has proved so successful that the drug is now routinely available for NHS patients with the same rare condition through the Cancer Drugs Fund.

Dr Adam Gibb, Clinical Research Fellow in Lymphoma at The Christie Hospital and Honorary member of the Institute of Cancer Sciences, said: "The drug can be administered rapidly and has few side effects. This is probably the most impressive set of scans I've seen. Ian was really up against it. He is in remission and we are increasingly confident about him.

Provided by University of Manchester

Citation: New cancer drug shows promise in first trial outside the US (2014, March 10) retrieved

6 May 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2014-03-cancer-drug-trial.html>

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