

Researchers successfully test a new combination therapy in sarcomas

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Drs. Martínez-Tirado and Garcia del Muro. Credit: IDIBELL

Researchers of the Sarcoma group at Bellvitge Biomedical Research Institute have successfully tested a new combined therapy for the treatment of sarcoma, a rare, aggressive tumor type affecting children and adults. The results of the clinical trial, published in *Targeted Oncology*, represent a successful step in the translational research strategy led by Dr. Òscar Martínez-Tirado and Dr. Xavier Garcia del

Muro.

The treatment combines two therapeutic strategies: gemcitabine, a conventional chemotherapy commonly used in the treatment of sarcomas, and sirolimus, a new generation immunosuppressive drug. "Gemcitabine offers a good degree of tolerance, which makes it a very good candidate for combination therapies," says Dr. Xavier Garcia del Muro, lead author of the study.

The study involved 28 participants. After receiving the treatment, the rate of patients free of progression at three months was 44 percent, which confirms the effectiveness of this new combined therapy. "We believe that the results are positive and that therefore the treatment deserves to be evaluated in subsequent studies," adds García del Muro.

"It is also worth noting the remarkable translational nature of the study, which goes from bench to bedside," says the researcher. Initially, the research group of Dr. Martínez-Tirado assessed the effectiveness of the treatment in cell lines and a mouse animal model, obtaining very promising results. The subsequent phase I clinical trial led them to determine the dosage and safety parameters of the combined treatment, which have been used in the new trial to test the effectiveness of the [treatment](#) in humans.

Researchers of the Oncobell program will continue working on new [clinical trials](#) to continue exploring this new therapeutic line in order to make it reach clinical practice as soon as possible.

More information: Juan Martin-Liberal et al, Phase II Study of Gemcitabine Plus Sirolimus in Previously Treated Patients with Advanced Soft-Tissue Sarcoma: a Spanish Group for Research on Sarcomas (GEIS) Study, *Targeted Oncology* (2017). [DOI: 10.1007/s11523-017-0539-9](https://doi.org/10.1007/s11523-017-0539-9)

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