# New research finds oral leukemia therapy to work as well as intravenous decitabine

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Researchers at Hackensack Meridian's John Theurer Cancer Center (JTCC), are part of a published Phase 3 study reporting on the equivalent safety and effectiveness in the oral treatment of blood cancers–such as myelodysplastic syndrome and/or chronic myelomonocytic leukemia–to its previously inpatient, intravenous treatment counterparts.

John Theurer Cancer Center is part of the NCI-designated Lombardi Comprehensive Cancer Center at Georgetown University.

Dr. James K. McCloskey, M.D., led JTCC's participation in the collaborative, international study on decitabine-cedazuridine oral therapy, and co-authored its findings in an article published in *The Lancet Haematology*.

The study found oral decitabine-cedazuridine–which gained FDA approval in 2020 and is most prominently sold under the brand name Inqovi–to be "pharmacologically and pharmacodynamically equivalent to intravenous decitabine."

"These results carry great potential for patient benefit and improved comfort in cancer treatment," said Dr. McCloskey, interim Chief of JTCC's Division of Leukemia. "They support the use of oral treatment as a safe and effective alternative to its parenteral, or intravenous form, and represent a radical product- and process innovation on the clinical care side, amounting to massive patient benefit."

McCloskey continued that patients benefit with more time. This new treatment method could give back hours, or even days, to the lives of patients who would have otherwise needed to spend time undergoing inpatient treatment for the same medication.

"I'm grateful to our peers in this continuing international study," said Dr. McCloskey. "It's through this kind of collaboration that we can achieve potentially radical innovation in clinical care to the most important betterment of patient care."

**More information:** Guillermo Garcia-Manero et al, Oral decitabine–cedazuridine versus intravenous decitabine for myelodysplastic syndromes and chronic myelomonocytic leukaemia

(ASCERTAIN): a registrational, randomised, crossover, pharmacokinetics, phase 3 study, *The Lancet Haematology* (2023). DOI: 10.1016/S2352-3026(23)00338-1

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