

New chemotherapy approach for treating stomach cancer

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Stomach cancer is caused by an uncontrolled growth of cells that starts in the stomach. Most stomach cancers are found when the disease has spread beyond the stomach, when a cure is less likely.

Mayo Clinic experts are exploring new ways to help patients with late-stage cancers. A new approach to treating stomach cancers called hyperthermic intraperitoneal [chemotherapy](#) (HIPEC) delivers heated liquid chemotherapy directly to the abdomen where it can target the cancer. In this Mayo Clinic Minute, Dr. Travis Grotz, a Mayo Clinic [surgical oncologist](#), discusses how HIPEC works and the potential benefits of the treatment.

During a HIPEC treatment, the abdominal cavity is bathed with hot chemotherapy to kill any microscopic cancer cells.

"The chemo can stay locally in that region, the abdomen, and then it can continue to work even past the procedure. And then that allows us to use really high concentrations of the chemo directly where the cancer is," says Dr. Grotz.

HIPEC has been used as a [treatment](#) for other cancers for several decades, but just recently has been adapted to [stomach cancer](#).

"We use the kind of a different combination of drugs that we've come up with based on other research and data and experience, and put them together and found that, in our experience, that they were more synergistic. They work together to kill the [cancer cells](#) very well. Our outcomes were quite a bit better than kind of traditional systemic chemotherapy," says Dr. Grotz.

The outcomes have been significantly better than those achieved with traditional chemotherapy. However, Dr. Grotz notes that more studies are ongoing.

"We want to improve survival, help people live longer, spend more time with their family, do it in a way that's safer, and has fewer complications and risks to patients," says Dr. Grotz.

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