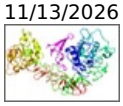
Early administration of Gefitinib may prevent development of pancreatic cancer.

Printed from https://www.cancerquest.org/newsroom/2011/01/early-administration-gefitinib-may-prevent-development-pancreatic-cancer on 11/13/2026



Protein and steroid hormone growth factors are a key element in the growth of many different types of cancer. For this reason, many therapies work by preventing growth factors from binding to their receptors. Gefitinib (Iressa®) is an inhibitor of the epidermal growth factor receptor. It is currently used in the later stages of pancreatic cancer, a disease with a historically low survival rate, in part due to the fact that by the time the disease is diagnosed, the cancer has frequently spread outside of the pancreas.

Researchers at Oklahoma Cancer Center have discovered that administration of Gefitinib in the early stages of the development of pancreatic ductal adenocarcinoma can prevent disease progression, preventing cancer development in mouse models. The drug is expected to enter into clinical trials at the University of Oklahoma within a year.

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