Targeting DNA repair protein may improve treatment of platinum-resistant cancers.

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The enzyme Rad18, with the help of the Cdc7 protein, directs DNA repair machinery to sites of DNA damage. DNA repair is important in healthy cells but this repair can interfere with certain forms of cancer treatment. If cellular DNA is severely damaged, the cell will often die instead of being repaired. Many chemotherapy drugs use platinum-based drugs to purposely cause damage and thus jumpstart cancer cell death. Many cancers, however, have high levels of Cdc7, which allows them to counteract the effects of the drugs and can lead to drug resistance. Cdc7 offers a promising new target for treating cancers resistant to platinum-based therapy.

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