Prevention of cancer metastasis linked to bone cell enzyme.

In order for cancer cells to survive, they hijack processes that naturally occur within the body. Because there are so many things needed for cells to survive, researchers are continuously discovering new ways to combat cancer progression. Researchers at the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center have reported that suppressing the enzyme EZH2 inhibits cancer cell invasion. EZH2 is an enzyme often found at high levels in aggressive solid tumors, and this overabundance has previously been linked with tumor spread (metastasis). In order to suppress the activity of EZH2, researchers modified the enzyme by adding a small chemical group called a phosphate. The modification inhibited the enzyme. Importantly, this type of modification occurs naturally in cells. In this case, the body naturally phosphorylates EZH2, during the formation of bone cells (osteoblasts). Mofidication of the pathway may be a viable target to prevent cance spread.

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