Modification of plant chemical creates dozens of new potential anti-cancer drugs.

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Cancer drug candidates may be obtained from one of two sources: naturally occurring compounds or synthetically produced compounds. Researchers at the Scripps Research Institute have utilized the positive effects of both approaches to create dozens of new compounds that may potentially aid in the treatment of cancer and HIV, and other conditions.

The flowering *Hypericum chinense* plant, known as *biyouyanagi* in Japan, has been shown to have both anti-HIV and anti-cancer properties. These effects are the result of natural chemicals, called biyouyanagins, produced by the plant. Researchers used UV light to modify these naturally occurring compounds. The result was a collection of new potential drugs that are now available for testing against cancer, HIV, and other diseases.

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