Scientists discover a new way to attack tumors.

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Blocking blood vessel development (angiogenesis) is an attractive way to treat cancer. Because the cancer cells themselves are not being targeted, there is less genetic instability in the targets. Despite this, drug resistance to anti-angiogenesis treatments is common. Researchers have identified a new protein (and related fragment) that potently interferes with angiogenesis in in the laboratory and in animal models. The protein (FKBPL) works, in part, by interfering with the migration of blood vessel precursor cells. This is a different mechanism than the majority of anti-angiogenesis drugs, including Avastin®. The protein also worked well in combination with a chemotherapy drug to kill cancer cells. The results suggest that attacking angiogenesis from several different directions may prove to be quite potent.

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