Tapeworm Drug May Prevent Metastasis.

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National Cancer Institute researchers, in collaboration with researchers from other groups, have discovered that a drug called niclosamide,used to treat tapeworm infections, can prevent metastasis of colon cancer. The researchers screened a large number of chemicals for their ability to inhibit the activation of the S100A4 gene. The protein encoded by the S100A4 gene is known to stimulate the spread (metastasis) of cancer cells. Niclosamide was found to inhibit the activity of the gene in the lab and in an animal model of colon cancer. Inhibition of the gene blocked cell movement and metastasis. Future studies will examine the effects of the drug on cancer that has already spread.

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