Zika Virus May One Day Combat Brain Cancer

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Researchers from the Washington University School of Medicine and the Cleveland Clinic recently conducted a study with the human and mouse cells that become glioblastomas. They found that the Zika virus infected and killed the soon-to-be glioblastoma stem cells, while leaving the healthy brain cells alone. Researchers reported that the virus infected and halted the growth of glioblastoma stem cells and infected the full-blown glioblastoma cells, at a lower level. The virus did not harm normal brain cells and tissues. The researchers stated, “further testing is needed to determine whether the virus is safe and effective in humans. Since Zika’s effects more harmful to developing brains, a Zika-based cancer therapy might be safe only in adults.” 1 The researchers are now testing treatments of Zika and traditional treatments, such as chemotherapy.2

1 Hamers, Laurel. "Zika could one day help combat deadly brain cancer." Science News. 2017 Sep 5. [SCIENCENEWS]

2 Zhe Zhu, Matthew J. Gorman, Lisa McKenzie, Jiani Chai, Christopher Hubert, Briana Prager, Estefania Fernandez, Justin Richner, Rong Zhang, Chao Shan, Eric Tycksen, Xiuxing Wang, Pei-Yong Shi, Michael Diamond, Jeremy Rich, and Milan Chheda. "Zika virus has oncolytic activity against glioblastoma stem cells." Journal of Experimental Medicine. 2017 Sep 5. [JEM]

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