Protecting The Heart From Chemotherapy

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Chemotherapy can have severe, and possibly permanent, side effects. One of them is heart damage. Although many chemotherapy drugs can cause heart damage, the one most linked to this is doxorubicin (brand name Adriamycin®).

Researchers have now identified a way to possibly prevent the heart damage without reducing the effectiveness of the drug. When cells are damaged by doxorubicin, they activate a 'suicide' protein called Bax. The new results show that a small chemical, called BAI1, can bind to Bax and prevent it from killing cells.

Heart cells have less Bax than cancer cells and are can be saved by amounts of Bal1 that do not rescue cancer cells. The research was done in mouse models of breast cancer and leukemia. Hopefully BAI1 will soon prove effective in people and make its way into the clinic!

The research results can be viewed here.

Source
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