

[Islet Cell Tumor - Latest Research](#) [1]

This section has been reviewed and approved by the [Cancer.Net Editorial Board](#) [2], 06/2015

ON THIS PAGE: You will read about the scientific research being done now to learn more about this type of tumor and how to treat it. To see other pages, use the menu on the side of your screen.

Doctors are working to learn more about islet cell tumors, ways to prevent them, how to best treat them, and how to provide the best care to people diagnosed with this disease. The following areas of research may include new options for patients through [clinical trials](#) [3]. Always talk with your doctor about the diagnostic and treatment options best for you.

- **Anti-angiogenesis therapy.** As discussed in the [Treatment Options](#) [4] section, anti-angiogenesis therapies are a type of targeted therapy used to treat advanced islet cell tumors. A number of new anti-angiogenesis therapies from the same family of drugs as sunitinib are being tested in clinical trials for islet cell tumors. These drugs are all taken orally.

Another anti-angiogenic drug is bevacizumab (Avastin), which is a monoclonal antibody given through an intravenous (IV) tube placed into a vein using a needle. It is already approved to treat colon, lung, kidney, and brain cancers. A recent study showed that combining bevacizumab with everolimus and octreotide increased the chances that an islet cell tumor would shrink and increased the time it took for a tumor to grow or spread. However, people who took bevacizumab did not live longer than those who did not. Bevacizumab treatment also caused more side effects than the standard treatment.

- **Other targeted therapies.** In addition to anti-angiogenesis therapies, new drugs that

block the mTOR pathway, as well as other signaling pathways important in the survival, growth, and spread of islet cell tumors, are also being studied.

- **Peptide receptor radionuclide therapy.** This technique involves attaching radioactive substances to somatostatin analogues. This is similar in principle to octreotide scanning used for the [diagnosis](#) [5] of an islet cell tumor, except in this case the radioactive substances being used, such as Yttrium-90, have the ability to destroy islet cell tumor cells. Peptide receptor radionuclide therapy is being actively explored and is used most notably in Europe.
- **Palliative care.** Clinical trials are underway to find better ways of reducing symptoms and side effects of current islet cell tumor treatments in order to improve patients' comfort and quality of life.

Looking for More About the Latest Research?

If you would like additional information about the latest areas of research regarding islet cell tumors, explore these related items that take you outside of this guide:

- To find clinical trials specific to your diagnosis, talk with your doctor or [search online clinical trial databases now](#) [6].
- Visit ASCO's [CancerProgress.Net](#) [7] website to learn more about the historical pace of research for pancreatic cancer. Please note this link takes you to a separate ASCO website.
- Visit the website of the [Conquer Cancer Foundation](#) [8] to find out how to help support research for every cancer type. Please note this link takes you to a separate ASCO website.

The [next section in this guide is Coping with Side Effects](#) [9], and it offers some guidance in how to cope with the physical, emotional, and social changes that cancer and its treatment can bring. Or, use the menu on the side of your screen to choose another section to continue reading this guide.

Links

[1] <http://www.cancer.net/cancer-types/islet-cell-tumor/latest-research>

[2] <http://www.cancer.net/about-us>

[3] <http://www.cancer.net/node/18949>

- [4] <http://www.cancer.net/node/18948>
- [5] <http://www.cancer.net/node/18946>
- [6] <http://www.cancer.net/node/24878>
- [7] <http://cancerprogress.net/timeline/pancreatic-cancer>
- [8] <http://www.conquercancerfoundation.org/research-results>
- [9] <http://www.cancer.net/node/18950>