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Chemotherapy Following Surgery Improves Survival for Patients with Early Stage Lung Cancer

New findings also suggest that patients with stage I adenocarcinoma who receive the oral chemotherapy drug UFT following surgery may live longer than those who are treated with surgery alone.

In a large study of nearly 1,000 patients with adenocarcinoma that had not spread beyond the lung, researchers at the Tokyo Medical University found the five-year survival rate for these patients was 87.9%, compared with 85.4% for patients who received surgery alone.

The benefit of UFT was even greater in patients who had tumors larger than three centimeters that had not spread to the surrounding lymph nodes.

In this group, 84.9% of patients treated with UFT were alive after five years, compared with 73.5% of patients who received surgery alone.

Fewer than 3% of patients treated with UFT experienced side effects. Those who did reported mild nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, liver dysfunction, and bone marrow dysfunction.

"The fact that long-term oral treatment with UFT after surgery was shown to extend survival and cause minimal side effects is likely to improve the standard of care in patients with stage I lung adenocarcinoma," said study investigator Masahiro Tsuboi, MD.

Presently, surgery alone is the standard treatment for stage I adenocarcinoma. UFT is widely available in Japan, but is not currently available in the United States.

For More Information

Clinical Trials [1]

Lung Cancer [2]

Managing Side Effects [3]

Links:
[1] http://www.cancer.net/patient/All+About+Cancer/Clinical+Trials
[2] http://www.cancer.net/patient/Cancer+Types/Lung+Cancer
[3] http://www.cancer.net/patient/All+About+Cancer/Treating+Cancer/Managing+Side+Effects