

## Drug Combination Increases Survival for Older People With Advanced Lung Cancer

A new study shows that using the drugs paclitaxel (Taxol) and carboplatin (Paraplatin) increases survival and slows the growth of advanced non-small cell lung cancer (NSCLC) for patients age 70 or older. The combination of drugs is used mostly for younger patients, while the standard treatment for older patients with advanced lung cancer is usually one drug, not a combination. Patients in this study who received paclitaxel and carboplatin lived about four months longer than the patients who received only one drug, either gemcitabine (Gemzar) or vinorelbine (Navelbine). In addition, the time it took for the cancer to grow or spread for the patients taking two drugs was almost twice as long as for the patients taking one drug. There were few serious side effects from the drug combination; however, patients who received the combination were more likely to have a decrease in white blood cells.

### What this means for patients

Older patients are often not given aggressive treatment out of concern that they will not be able to tolerate it. These results demonstrate that a more intensive treatment plan given to younger patients can be effective and tolerable for older patients, said lead author Elisabeth Quoix, MD, Professor of Medicine at University Hospital in Strasbourg, France.

### What to Ask Your Doctor

- What type of lung cancer do I have? What is the stage?
- What are my treatment options?
- What are the side effects of treatment? How can they be managed?

### For More Information

[Guide to Lung Cancer](#) [1]

[ASCO Answers Fact Sheet: Lung Cancer](#) [2]

[What to Know: ASCO's Guideline on Chemotherapy for Stage IV Non-Small Cell Lung Cancer](#) [3]

[Cancer in Older Adults](#) [4]

#### Links:

[1] <http://www.cancer.net/patient/Cancer+Types/Lung+Cancer>

[2] [http://www.cancer.net/sites/cancer.net/files/vignette/ASCO\\_Answers\\_Lung.pdf](http://www.cancer.net/sites/cancer.net/files/vignette/ASCO_Answers_Lung.pdf)

[3] <http://www.cancer.net/patient/Publications+and+Resources/What+to+Know%3A+ASCO%27s+Guidelines/What+to+Know%3A+ASCO%27s+Guideline+on+Chemotherapy+for+Stage+IV+Non-Small+Cell+Lung+Cancer>

[4] <http://www.cancer.net/patient/Coping/Age-Specific+Information/Cancer+in+Older+Adults>