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Long-Term Treatment with Olaparib May Help Treat Recurrent Ovarian Cancer [1]

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In a recent study, researchers found that maintenance therapy with olaparib, a type of drug called a PARP inhibitor, increased the amount of time it took for recurrent ovarian cancer (cancer that has come back after treatment) to worsen. Maintenance therapy is ongoing treatment that is given after the standard treatment to help control the growth of cancer.

The standard treatment for ovarian cancer is chemotherapy, followed by ongoing testing to watch for a recurrence of the cancer. After standard chemotherapy, the women in this study received either olaparib or a placebo (an inactive drug). Researchers found that the cancer took about four months longer to worsen for women who received olaparib compared with women who received the placebo.

The side effects of olaparib include [nausea and vomiting](#) [2], [fatigue](#) [3], and [anemia](#) [4] (low level of red blood cells), but they are usually manageable.

What this means for patients

“A treatment with few severe side effects that could be used for months or perhaps years as maintenance therapy after standard chemotherapy could be a big step forward and ultimately extend survival,” said lead author Jonathan A. Ledermann, MD, Professor of Medical Oncology at UCL Cancer Institute, University College London. “This study shows that maintenance therapy with a PARP inhibitor can be used for ovarian cancer.” Researchers are still studying olaparib for ovarian cancer, and it may not be available outside of clinical trials.

Questions to ask your doctor

- What type of ovarian cancer do I have? What is the stage?
- Do you recommend additional treatment after the main treatment is finished?
- What clinical trials are open to me?

For More Information

[Guide to Ovarian Cancer](#) [5]

[Explaining Maintenance Therapy](#) [6]

[Dealing With Cancer Recurrence](#) [7]

Links:

[1] <http://www.cancer.net/long-term-treatment-olaparib-may-help-treat-recurrent-ovarian-cancer>

[2] <http://www.cancer.net/patient/All+About+Cancer/Treating+Cancer/Managing+Side+Effects/Nausea+and+Vomiting>

[3] <http://www.cancer.net/patient/All+About+Cancer/Treating+Cancer/Managing+Side+Effects/Fatigue>

[4] <http://www.cancer.net/patient/All+About+Cancer/Treating+Cancer/Managing+Side+Effects/Anemia>

[5] <http://www.cancer.net/patient/Cancer+Types/Ovarian+Cancer>

[6]

<http://www.cancer.net/patient/All+About+Cancer/Cancer.Net+Feature+Articles/Treatments%2C+Tests%2C+and+Procedures/Ex>

[7] <http://www.cancer.net/patient/All+About+Cancer/Treating+Cancer/Dealing+With+Cancer+Recurrence>