

New Drug Helps Manage Advanced Non-Small Cell Lung Cancer for Some Patients

Researchers found that a drug called crizotinib helped shrink the tumor for patients with advanced lung cancer who have a specific genetic change. Crizotinib is an ALK inhibitor that stops cancer cells from producing ALK, a substance cancer cells use to grow and spread. Not all people with lung cancer have cells that produce ALK. It is only made by cells when one gene called *ALK* attaches to another gene, in a process called gene fusion. About one in 20 people with lung cancer have such a gene fusion. All patients who participated in this study had the *ALK* gene fusion. Researchers found that the ALK inhibitor helped shrink the tumors for more than half the patients and slowed or stopped tumor growth for most of the patients.

What this means for patients

?For patients with advanced NSCLC, we would expect only about 1 out of 10 patients to have the tumor stop growing and spreading,? said lead author Yung-Jue Bang, MD, PhD, Professor in the Department of Internal Medicine at Seoul National University College of Medicine in Seoul, Korea. ?These results are an improvement over what we would see with standard chemotherapy for patients with advanced lung cancer.? This study is an example of personalized medicine, which looks to match treatments with the patients who will benefit the most. Research on ALK inhibitors is ongoing and tests to look for an ALK gene fusion may not be available outside of clinical trials.

What to Ask Your Doctor

- What type of lung cancer do I have?
- What is the stage?
- What are my treatment options?
- What clinical trials are open to me?
- What treatment you do recommend? Why?

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]

[Facts About Personalized Cancer Medicine](#) [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

[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/All+About+Cancer/Cancer.Net+Feature+Articles/Treatments%2C+Tests%2C+and+Procedures/Facts+About+Personalized+Cancer+Medicine>