

Drug Combination Slows Colon Cancer Growth More Than Standard Treatment

In a study of people with stage III colon cancer, researchers found that treatment with the drugs capecitabine (Xeloda) and oxaliplatin (Eloxatin) after surgery (called adjuvant therapy) slowed the growth of the cancer more than standard treatment. Standard treatment for stage III colon cancer after surgery uses the drugs fluorouracil (5-FU) and leucovorin (Wellcovorin). After three years, almost three quarters of the patients who received the newer drug combination did not have the colon cancer grow or spread compared with about two thirds of the patients who received the standard treatment. This benefit was seen for patients of all ages, including those age 70 or older. Previous studies have shown that older people with colon cancer do not benefit from newer drugs after surgery. In addition, there have been concerns that aggressive chemotherapy may be risky for older patients.

What this means for patients

?These findings show that patients with stage III colon cancer may benefit more from the newer adjuvant therapy schedule than from the traditional treatment, even for older patients. While treatment decisions should be made on an individual basis, these findings shed important new light on how we can best treat otherwise healthy patients age 70 and older,? said lead author Daniel G. Haller, MD, Professor of Medicine and Deenie Greitzer Professor of Gastrointestinal Oncology at the Abramson Cancer Center at the University of Pennsylvania. It is important to talk with your doctor about all treatment options, including the benefits and risks of each treatment.

What to ask your doctor

- What stage of colorectal cancer do I have? What does this mean?
- What are my treatment options?
- What treatment do you recommend? Why?

For More Information

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

[Colon Cancer Adjuvant Treatment Plan and Summary](#) [2]

[Understanding Chemotherapy](#) [3]

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

Links:

[1] <http://www.cancer.net/node/18701>

[2] <http://www.cancer.net/node/25394>

[3] <http://www.cancer.net/node/24723>

[4] <http://www.cancer.net/node/25115>