



Unexpected Benefits Observed in Cancer Treatments

Thursday 7 May, 2015

Australian researchers have made significant progress into cancer research, with results from a study highlighting the potential benefits that innovative treatments may offer to cancer sufferers.

The study, led by Associate Professor Brendon Coventry from the University of Adelaide, showed that local injections into cancer masses, not only produce size reductions in the injected area, but can also produce wider unexpected effects in the body.

“Sometimes, this can even lead to size reductions in cancers elsewhere that have not been injected,” A/Prof Coventry said.

A/Prof Coventry said the study brought together reported results from a number of varied local treatments and he presented his findings at the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons’ Annual Scientific Conference in Perth.

“The results of the study are promising and strongly suggest that many local treatments are often unexpectedly helping the patient more than just at the local injection site, by producing longer survival times,” he said.

“Far from being just ‘local’ the effects seem to be engineering ‘systemic’ body-wide immune responses in the treated patients, by driving forward and activating an already pre-existing immune response going on in the cancer patient.

“This occurs in some patients well enough to significantly prolong survival, but the real challenge is to achieve these effects in all patients, which should be possible perhaps with vaccines or other immunotherapies.

“We have identified that the immune system repeatedly switches ‘on’, and reflexly switches ‘off’, and that administering doses of therapy at the correct time during this cyclical process appears vitally important for creating body-wide immune responses to improve clinical effectiveness.

“We suspect that this might be what is happening by chance with these locally injected therapies,” A/Prof Coventry said.

ROYAL AUSTRALASIAN COLLEGE OF SURGEONS

MEDIA RELEASE



Over a thousand surgeons from the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons as well as international surgeons from the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh are gathering at the Perth Convention and Exhibition Centre this week for a series of workshops, discussions, Plenaries and masterclasses across a broad range of surgical issues.

The RACS 2015 conference will also pay tribute to the centenary of Gallipoli, by analysing ethics and developments in surgery over the past 100 years, in war and peace time, as well as exploring what the future may hold in surgical progress.

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