

# Hard to Treat Pancreatic Cancer Responds to Immunotherapy

[Pancreatic cancer](#) is one of the more difficult forms of cancer to diagnose, resulting in a low survival rate. A recent study found that [immunotherapy for cancer](#) holds great promise for more effective treatment.

## **Current treatments for pancreatic cancer**

At this time, surgery appears to be the best option for pancreatic cancer. Unfortunately, the tumors are often discovered too late for surgery to be feasible. Doctors are left using chemotherapy and other methods to control the cancer.

## **Medical breakthrough with immunotherapy**

Researchers at University of Rochester Medical Center in New York set out to find a treatment that could make pancreatic cancer more receptive to surgery. The test involved use of PF-0416309, an [immunotherapy drug](#) that targets immune cells in pancreatic tumors. Subjects included 47 patients whose pancreatic cancer had begun to spread. Eight received chemotherapy alone, while the others received a combination of chemotherapy and the immunotherapy drug. Most of those who received the combination experienced a halt in the tumor's growth, which was double the rate

projected by the research team. Some saw their tumors shrink, while in one patient the cancer disappeared.

**What's next?**

Due to health issues, three patients dropped out, but otherwise no one had side effects more serious than those experienced with chemotherapy alone. The researchers now plan to extend the scope of the test with phase 2 trials.