Triple Combo for Pancreatic Cancer

A three-pronged approach could offer hope for people with hard-to-treat advanced pancreatic cancer.

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A three-pronged approach could offer hope for people with hard-to-treat advanced pancreatic cancer, researchers reported at the American Association for Cancer Research annual meeting.

The regimen includes an experimental CD40-targeted antibody dubbed APX005M, which stimulates T-cell activity against tumors, plus the checkpoint inhibitor Opdivo (nivolumab) and the chemotherapy drugs gemcitabine and Abraxane (nab-paclitaxel).

In a small Phase Ib study, two thirds of evaluable participants experienced tumor shrinkage—including some long-lasting responses—supporting further testing in a larger trial, now under way at seven Parker Institute for Cancer Immunotherapy sites.

“The idea is to attack the cancer from different angles,” says lead study author Robert Vonderheide, MD, of the Abramson Cancer Center at the University of Pennsylvania. “Although the results are early, we see encouraging signs that anti-CD40 immunotherapy, checkpoint inhibition and chemotherapy in combination could be an effective new approach to treat patients with metastatic pancreatic cancer.”

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