



WEB EXCLUSIVES

Therapeutic Vaccine Delays Lymphoma Recurrence

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While follicular lymphoma frequently responds to chemotherapy and can have a long course, the disease is considered incurable because it almost always recurs. Researchers of a lymphoma trial hope that BiovaxID, a personalized vaccine, could help delay those recurrences.

The study included 117 patients who experienced at least a six-month remission after chemotherapy, and retained that remission until receiving either BiovaxID or a control vaccine. Each patient randomized to the BiovaxID arm was given a series of injections of a vaccine developed from their own cancer cells, making it a specialized targeted drug against the individual's malignant B cells. After a median of nearly five years follow-up, BiovaxID improved cancer-free survival by 47 percent, delaying recurrence for more than a year, from 30.6 months to 44.2 months, when compared with the control vaccine. No major differences in side effects occurred between the two arms.

Researchers stressed the need for future studies, including combining the vaccine with targeted drugs such as Rituxan (rituximab), an agent that is now a standard of care for lymphoma.