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Israeli Researchers Make Significant Breakthrough in Lung Cancer Treatment

May 28, 2012 [No Comments](#) by Priya Menon



Researchers Amnon Peled, left, and Oz Shapira in their lab on Wednesday. Photo by Shiran Granot

Research team from Israel find significant reduction in lung tumor growth on using BKT140. Pic courtesy:<http://israel-lightontonations.blogspot.in/2012/05/israeli-researchers-score-success->

A four-member research team at the Hadassah University Hospital, Ein Kerem has made lung cancer treatment breakthroughs, [reports CBN](#). The team found that when a blocking enzyme was injected into mice, it found its way into the tumor in the lung and reduced its volume. The findings have been presented at the American Association for Thoracic Surgery conference at San Francisco. Approval for clinical trials on [lung cancer](#) patients is awaited.

What did the research team do?

- The research team was exploring two components:
 - CXCR4 – a receptor
 - CXCL12 – a protein receptor adheres to
- These two components are often present in cancer patients.
- Researchers observed that these components increase in the lung cancer tissue with advancement of disease.
- When a substance called BKT140 was added, the receptor and the protein could not adhere to each other. In other words, the BKT140, blocked the binding of protein and receptor leading to termination and death of cancer cells and thereby reduced size of lung tumors.
- Biokine Therapeutics of Rehovot developed the blocker, BKT140 for a different purpose. It was a drug that was given to bone marrow donors to hasten production of bone marrow cells prior to donation. When the blocker was injected to lab grown lung tumor cells, it slowed down growth of tumor as well as reduced the size by half.
- When blocker BKT140 injections were combined with radiation and chemotherapy, tumor growth rate was found to reduce by 90%.

The study was conducted by Dr. Ori Wald, a physician-researcher at Hadassah's Cardiothoracic Surgery Department; with department head Prof. Oz. Shapira; Dr. Uzi Izhar, director of the thoracic surgery unit; and Prof. Amnon Peled of the hospital's gene therapy unit.

Lung Cancer is the second most common cancer in the world. New treatments open up a whole world of hope and promise for those afflicted.

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[Priya Menon](#)

About the author

Priya Menon, Scientific Media Editor at CureTalk, writes about research in frontline medicine, health and healthcare. She holds a masters in Microbiology and her experience include research in molecular biology and genetics. She amalgamates her writing interests and research inclinations through scientific communication and conveys intricate scientific content to a wider audience. She is an avid reader, enjoys classical dance and theatre.

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