

Promising cervical cancer study

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Research on cervical cancer performed by a physician at the University of Arizona Cancer Center at St. Joseph's Hospital and Medical Center has been published in the *New England Journal of Medicine*. The multi-site research project by Bradley J. Monk, MD, is expected to change the standard of care for women with advanced cervical cancer.

The featured research revealed that women with advanced cervical cancer live about four months longer with the combined use of bevacizumab (Avastin) and chemotherapy compared to chemotherapy alone. Women who combined bevacizumab with chemotherapy lived an average of 17 months after diagnosis, while those who received chemotherapy alone lived 13.3 months.

"This research proves that there are new options for patients with metastatic cervical cancer," says Dr. Monk, the project's senior author. "I predict that adding bevacizumab to chemotherapy will become the new standard of care." Dr. Monk is nationally recognized for his expertise in cervical cancer and chairs the Gynecologic Oncology Cervical Cancer Committee for the National Cancer Institute funded Gynecologic Oncology Group. Krishnansu S. Tewari, MD, at the University of California Irvine was the first author on the study published online February 20 in the Journal. (GOG 240ClinicalTrials.gov number NCT00803062)

The research was conducted between April 2009 and January 2012. A total of 452 women participated in the trial and were enrolled from 164 institutions in the United States and Spain. St. Joseph's Hospital and

Medical Center was the only site enrolling in Arizona.

During the clinical trial, patients were randomly assigned to groups who only received chemotherapy and to groups who received both [chemotherapy](#) with bevacizumab.

Approximately 12,000 cases of cervical cancer are diagnosed in the United States annually, and with continued increases in vaccinations, numbers of cases are expected to decrease further. However, for vulnerable populations without access to health care, cervical cancers remains a serious problem, with 500,000 new cases and 250,000 deaths annually.

"There has been a large unmet medical need for active treatments for [cervical cancer](#)," says Dr. Monk. "We believe the results of this study are a significant step forward and now we will move to trying to add [bevacizumab](#) to a front-line treatment when cancers are more curable, rather than using it at the time of recurrence."

Provided by St. Joseph's Hospital and Medical Center

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