

# Oral melatonin has no effect on appetite in advanced cancer

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Oral melatonin does not improve appetite, weight, or quality of life for patients with cachexia due to advanced cancer, according to research published online Feb. 25 in the *Journal of Clinical Oncology*.

(HealthDay)—Oral melatonin does not improve appetite, weight, or quality of life for patients with cachexia due to advanced cancer, according to research published online Feb. 25 in the *Journal of Clinical Oncology*.

In an effort to determine whether [melatonin](#) may be associated with appetite improvement in patients with cancer cachexia, Egidio Del Fabbro, M.D., of the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center in Houston, and colleagues performed a randomized, double-blind, 28-day trial of melatonin 20 mg versus placebo in 48 patients with advanced lung or [gastrointestinal cancer](#).

This study was closed for futility after the interim analysis was

performed and results suggested that, even with a larger sample size, the results were not likely to change. No significant difference was observed between melatonin- and placebo-treated groups with regard to appetite, other symptoms, weight, score on the Functional Assessment of Anorexia/Cachexia Therapy questionnaire, toxicity, or survival.

"In cachectic patients with advanced lung or gastrointestinal cancer, oral melatonin 20 mg at night did not improve appetite, weight, or quality of life compared with placebo," the authors write. "More research is required to determine whether melatonin has a role in the supportive care of patients earlier in their disease [trajectory](#)."

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