



NEW KIDNEY CANCER SURGERY TECHNIQUE COULD CUT ORGAN DAMAGE

A NEW method of surgery for kidney cancer could help reduce organ damage, leading to more successful treatment of the disease, scientists have discovered.

The research*, presented today (Wednesday) at the National Cancer Research Institute (NCRI) Cancer Conference in Liverpool, outlines a new form of key-hole, robotic surgery technique which only removes the tumour and saves the kidney.

This is achieved without stopping blood supply to the kidney at all – minimising kidney damage. Larger, more serious tumours could also be removed by this technique.

Existing methods of kidney-sparing surgery stop blood flow to the kidney while the tumour is removed.

Stopping blood flow, even briefly, can affect kidney function, which can have an impact on the patient's long-term survival.

Dr Inderbir S Gill**, pioneer of this new technique based at the University of Southern California said: "Good kidney function over the long-term is particularly important in patients with kidney cancer.

"We're optimistic this new robotic surgical technique, that allows the healthy part of the kidney to be saved, will enable the best possible function of the organ, which we hope can increase the patient's life-span."

Under the new method, surgeons can control specific branches of the kidney's arteries which directly supply blood to the tumour. Blood supply to the rest of the kidney stays untouched.

So far the technique - first used nine months ago - has been carried out successfully on 50 patients mostly in the US but also in the UK, India and Hong Kong.

Scientists now plan to compare patients having the new technique with those going through established methods of surgery to find out whether effectiveness of treatment, kidney function, and patient survival differ.

Dr Gill said: "Our initial analyses suggest that patients having the new type of surgery may have superior outcomes and better kidney function."

Professor Tim Eisen, Cancer Research UK's kidney cancer expert, said: "This research provides a big step forward in improving methods for removing the cancerous part of the kidney.

"This is an important technique since it allows kidney cancer patients, even some with large tumours, to keep as much as possible of their normal kidney function. They may need this later in life.

"Surgery is the main form of treatment for kidney cancer which has not spread to other organs and surgeons are continuously trying to refine their methods. Cancer Research UK welcomes new techniques, such as this one, which can improve the results of surgery and quality of life after the operation."

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Notes to Editors:

*Gill, IS – Surgical advances in renal cancer, 2010 (<http://www.ncri.org.uk/ncriconference/2010abstracts/abstracts/Para95.htm>)

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About the NCRI Cancer Conference

The National Cancer Research Institute (NCRI) Cancer Conference is the UK's major forum for showcasing the best British and international cancer research. The Conference offers unique opportunities for networking and sharing knowledge by bringing together world leading experts from all cancer research disciplines. The seventh annual NCRI Cancer Conference is taking place from the 6-9 November at the BT Convention Centre in Liverpool. For more information visit www.ncri.org.uk/ncriconference

About the NCRI

The National Cancer Research Institute (NCRI) was established in April 2001. It is a UK-wide partnership between the government, charity and industry which promotes co-operation in cancer research among the 21 member organisations for the benefit of patients, the public and the scientific community. For more information visit www.ncri.org.uk

NCRI members are: the Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry (ABPI); Association for International Cancer Research; Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council; Breakthrough Breast Cancer; Breast Cancer Campaign; Cancer Research UK; CHILDREN with LEUKAEMIA, Department of Health (England); Economic and Social Research Council; Leukaemia and Lymphoma Research; Ludwig Institute for Cancer Research; Macmillan Cancer Support; Marie Curie Cancer Care; Medical Research Council; Northern Ireland Health and Social Care (Research & Development Office); Roy Castle Lung Cancer Foundation; Scottish Government Health Directorates (Chief Scientist Office); Tenovus; Welsh Assembly Government (Wales Office of Research and Development for Health & Social Care); The Wellcome Trust; and Yorkshire Cancer Research.

www.ncri.org.uk/ncriconference

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