Alliance Public Study Result Summary

What this study is about

This study tested if patients whose stage III colon cancer came back (called a “recurrence”) lived longer if they exercised after they received different chemotherapy treatments.

The full title of this study is: CALGB 89803 (Alliance) – Phase III intergroup trial of irinotecan (CPT-11) (NSC# 616348) plus fluorouracil/leucovorin (5-FU/LV) versus fluorouracil/leucovorin alone after curative resection for patients with stage III colon cancer

Why the study was done

Past research showed that people who are physically active have a lower risk of developing colon cancer. There are also clues that patients who exercise once they are diagnosed with colon cancer may have a lower risk of getting a recurrence, although regular exercise does not eliminate all risk.

This study looked at different exercise levels and whether they helped people live longer after their stage III colon cancer came back. It was part of a bigger study that compared two different chemotherapy treatments given after surgery for patients with stage III colon cancer to try to lower the risk of recurrence.

Study results

These results are for people with stage III colon cancer whose cancer has returned.

Patients who were more physically active after their treatment for a recurrence of stage III colon cancer showed a slight improvement in living longer, compared to those who were not active during that time.

The study did not have enough people to prove that the results were not due to chance. Researchers may study this again to confirm the results with more patients.

Results from related studies

A related study looked to see if coffee, tea and caffeine played a role in the return of cancer (recurrence) in patients with stage III colon cancer. Higher coffee and caffeine amounts were linked with reduced cancer recurrence and fewer deaths in stage III colon cancer patients.

What the results mean

If these results can be repeated in other studies, exercise might help some colon cancer patients who have a recurrence. Patients should discuss any exercise program with their doctors first, and may want to discuss coffee intake as well.

How the study worked

Patients filled out questionnaires about diet and lifestyle at two time points – while they were taking chemotherapy and about 6 months after they finished chemotherapy. Patients who finished the second questionnaire were grouped into three different levels of exercise activity and followed to see how they did.

When did the study start and end? The study started in April 2009. All patients were enrolled by May 2001.

How many patients joined? 237 patients who returned the second questionnaire were included in the exercise study, out of a total of 1,264 patients who joined the chemotherapy trial.

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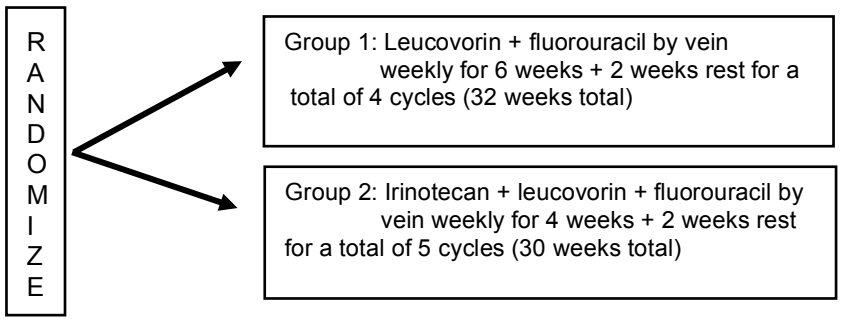
Here is a picture that explains how patients were placed into the original study.



Talk to your doctor if you want more information about this study.

Scientific publications about this study

Details about the study can be found in these articles:

- Impact of physical activity after cancer diagnosis on survival in patients with recurrent colon cancer: Findings from CALGB 89803/Alliance. Jeon J, Sato K, Niedzwiecki D, Ye X, Saltz LB, et al. Clinical Colorectal Cancer. 2013 Dec;12(4):233-238

To learn about this trial, visit the ClinicalTrials.gov website at – https://clinicaltrials.gov/ct2/show/NCT00003835?term=CALGB+89803&rank=1

This study was sponsored by the Alliance for Clinical Trials in Oncology – a national cooperative network that runs large cancer clinical trials. The Alliance is supported by the National Cancer Institute (NCI) and brings researchers together to develop better treatments for cancers. More information about the Alliance is at http://www.allianceforclinicaltrialsinoncology.org.

This summary lists what is known about this research study as of April 2015. New Information may be available.

We thank the people who joined this study and made it possible. *We do research to try to learn the best ways to help patients. The people who joined this study helped us to do that.*

Thank you for your interest in learning more about cancer research advances.