

Researchers successfully combine antibody-drug conjugate with immunotherapy to attack breast cancer cells

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To more efficiently treat breast cancer, scientists have been researching molecules that selectively bind to cancer cells and deliver a substance that can kill the tumor cells, for several years. Researchers from the University and University Hospital Basel have now for the first time successfully combined such an antibody-drug conjugate with a therapy that stimulates the immune system to attack tumor cells. This opens the door to new therapeutic options in the treatment of breast cancer, report the researchers in the scientific journal *Science Translational Medicine*.

In nearly every fifth breast cancer patient, an above-average number of HER2 ^[3] receptors are located on the surface of the tumor cells. These receptors are molecules that send growth factor signals into the cell. The overabundance of receptors causes the cancer cells to divide rapidly and the tumor grows faster than average.

For some years now, a new class of drugs called antibody-drug conjugates (ADCs) have been used, which work in two ways: they consist of an antibody that binds selectively to the tumor cell receptor and interrupts the signal to propagate; they also act as a transport vehicle for a chemical substance that enters the cancer cells with the antibody and triggers their death. The researchers demonstrate that the use of specific cytotoxic substances can also have a beneficial effect on the body's immune system.

To read more, please click [here](#) ^[4].

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