

# New hope for men with most aggressive prostate cancer

By Laura Donnelly HEALTH EDITOR

MEN with prostate cancer have been offered new hope by research suggesting that the most aggressive form of the disease could respond best to a new class of drugs.

The breakthrough was last night hailed as an “exciting step forward” in working out how to help those who are resistant to most standard treatments.

In recent years, a new class of drugs harnessing the immune system to fight the disease has shown promise in treatment of a range of cancers.

Immunotherapy works best in cancers that have lots of mutations. However, most forms of prostate cancer have few mutations.

The new study was able to identify the cases of advanced prostate cancer

that were genetically unstable – making them easier for the immune system to recognise. The study looked at 127 tumour biopsies from 124 patients and genomic information from a further 254 patients.

Johann de Bono, regius professor of cancer research at The Institute of Cancer Research, London, said: “We made an exciting step forward in working out how to treat men with such aggressive, unstable tumours.

“We discovered that tumours with mismatch repair mutations have key hallmarks that make them particularly likely to respond to checkpoint inhibitor immunotherapy.”

Every year around 47,000 men in the UK are diagnosed with prostate cancer. The study was published in the *Journal of Clinical Investigation*.