

'Trojan' drug fights tumours from within

Chris Smyth Health Editor

A "Trojan horse" drug is able to shrink tumours in patients with six different types of cancers, early results show.

The medicine tricks cancer cells into drawing it inside them, where it releases toxic chemicals and has shown promising results in fighting tumours of the ovaries, cervix, bladder, gullet, womb lining and lung, but not prostate.

Tisotumab vedotin uses an antibody which binds to a receptor common on the surface of cancer cells. This draws the antibody inside, with a toxic compound activated only then, minimising harm to healthy tissue.

In an early-stage trial of 150 patients tumours shrunk or stopped growing in more than a quarter those with bladder and cervical cancer. It halted tumour growth in 14 per cent with ovarian cancer, 13 per cent with lung and gullet cancers and 7 per cent with endometrial cancer. The effect lasted for almost six months on average, according to results published in *The Lancet Oncology*.

Professor Johann de Bono of the Institute of Cancer Research in London, who led the study, said: "Our early study shows that it has the potential to treat a large number of different types of cancer, and particularly some of those with very poor survival rates."

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