

Phase II Study: Revlimid successful

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U.S. scientists say a Phase II trial of Revlimid in patients with incurable blood cancer has produced positive results.

The researchers at the Moffitt Cancer Center and Research Institute in Tampa, Fla., say the study found more than 75 percent of patients reduced their need for transfusions and two-thirds were completely freed from the need for transfusions.

Most significantly, in 45 percent of patients, there was no detectable trace of the cancer. After two years of follow-up, patients continue to respond and do well on treatment, representing a breakthrough in treatment for myelodysplastic syndrome, or MDS.

"These new, landmark data demonstrate that Revlimid in some cases, eliminates all signs of the cancer's genetic cause -- an abnormality on the chromosome 5 -- can reduce or even eliminate the need for transfusions in many patients with MDS, and after two years these responses have continued to hold," said Dr. Alan List, professor of oncology and medicine, the lead author of the study.

MDS, a cancer in which the bone marrow fails to make enough functioning blood cells, kills up to 70,000 people annually.

The research appears in the Oct. 5 issue of the New England Journal of Medicine.

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