



# Cancer drug investigated as anti-inflammatory for lethal conditions including COVID-19

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An existing cancer drug could potentially modify a severe hyper-inflammatory 'storm' associated with some conditions, which may include the COVID-19 virus, according to Hudson Institute researchers.

Dr Michael Gantier

The researchers joined forces with cancer drug developer, Noxopharm, and discovered that the oncology company's prostate cancer medication idronoxil could block the production of several pro-inflammatory proteins, known as cytokines. These proteins are believed to be involved in a 'cytokine storm', which causes a severe inflammatory response believed to be responsible for most of COVID-19 deaths.

The discovery in pre-clinical cell models is an encouraging development towards human clinical trials as a potential COVID-19 treatment.

Hudson Institute researcher Dr Michael Gantier, Research Group Head of the Nucleic Acids and Innate Immunity Laboratory, identified the previously unknown functions of idronoxil in blocking the cytokines, in his laboratory research.

"Our laboratory studies indicate that idronoxil inhibits inflammatory cytokines produced in the context of tissue damage seen in acute respiratory distress syndrome (ARDS)," Dr Gantier said.

"Unlike strategies selectively targeting specific cytokines, our findings suggest that idronoxil blocks the process of inflammatory cytokine production, along with other key influencers of organ failure," he said.

"Our continued work is focused on linking what idronoxil does in cell models, and what actually happens in critical COVID-19 patients."