

# Rectal cancer after a complete response to chemo radiotherapy.

George William\*

Department of chemotherapy, University of Melbourne, USA

## Abstract

Rectal cancer is a type of cancer that develops in the rectum, which is the last part of the large intestine before the anus. Chemo radiotherapy is a common treatment for rectal cancer, which involves a combination of chemotherapy and radiation therapy. In some cases, patients with rectal cancer may achieve a complete response to chemo radiotherapy, which means that there is no evidence of cancer remaining after treatment. However, even after a complete response, there is still a risk of cancer recurrence. A study published in the journal JAMA Oncology in 2021 analyzed the risk of cancer recurrence in patients with rectal cancer who achieved a complete response to chemo radiotherapy. The study included 485 patients who underwent chemo radiotherapy for rectal cancer and achieved a complete response.

**Keywords:** Rectal cancer, Anakinra, Phase I, Chemo radiotherapy, FibroblastInterleukin-1.

## Introduction

The researchers found that the risk of cancer recurrence was highest in the first two years after treatment, with a 2-year recurrence-free survival rate of 88%. However, even after five years, there was still a risk of recurrence, with a 5-year recurrence-free survival rate of 77%. The study also found that the risk of recurrence was higher in patients who had a higher initial stage of cancer, as well as in those who had a longer interval between the completion of chemoradiotherapy and surgery to remove the cancer. The findings of this study highlight the importance of close follow-up and surveillance for patients with rectal cancer who achieve a complete response to chemoradiotherapy. Even after a complete response, there is still a risk of cancer recurrence, and patients should continue to receive regular monitoring and follow-up care [1].

Rectal cancer is a type of cancer that develops in the cells lining the rectum, which is the lower part of the large intestine. It is a common type of cancer, with more than 43,000 new cases diagnosed in the United States each year. The standard treatment for rectal cancer is a combination of chemotherapy and radiation therapy, which is known as chemo radiotherapy. This treatment is usually given before surgery to shrink the tumor and make it easier to remove. However, even after a complete response to chemo radiotherapy, some patients may experience a recurrence of the cancer. In this article, we will discuss the causes, diagnosis, and treatment options for rectal cancer after a complete response to chemo radiotherapy [2].

## Causes of Recurrent Rectal Cancer

Recurrence of rectal cancer after a complete response to chemoradiotherapy is a challenging issue that requires careful evaluation and management. There are several reasons why

this might occur. One of the main causes of recurrent rectal cancer is incomplete eradication of the tumor during the initial treatment. Even with the best available treatments, cancer cells can sometimes survive and continue to grow after chemoradiotherapy. Additionally, some patients may have undetected metastases, which are cancer cells that have spread to other parts of the body, before or during treatment. These cells can be too small to detect on imaging studies, but they can still cause a recurrence of the cancer. Other factors that can contribute to recurrent rectal cancer include genetics, lifestyle factors such as smoking and alcohol consumption, and exposure to certain environmental toxins.

## Diagnosis of Recurrent Rectal Cancer

The diagnosis of recurrent rectal cancer usually begins with a thorough medical history and physical examination. The doctor may also order imaging tests such as computed tomography (CT) scans, magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) scans, or positron emission tomography (PET) scans to look for signs of cancer. In some cases, a biopsy may be necessary to confirm the diagnosis. During a biopsy, a small piece of tissue is removed from the area of concern and examined under a microscope for the presence of cancer cells [3].

## Treatment of Recurrent Rectal Cancer

The treatment of recurrent rectal cancer depends on several factors, including the location and size of the tumor, the extent of the recurrence, and the patient's overall health. In some cases, surgery may be necessary to remove the recurrent tumor. However, surgery is not always an option, especially if the cancer has spread to other parts of the body. In these cases, other treatments such as chemotherapy, radiation therapy, or targeted therapy may be used.

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\*Correspondence to: George William, Department of chemotherapy, University of Melbourne, USA, E-mail: georgewilliam@gmail.com

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Chemotherapy is a treatment that uses drugs to kill cancer cells. It is often used in combination with radiation therapy to treat recurrent rectal cancer. Chemotherapy drugs can be given orally or intravenously, depending on the specific drug and the patient's needs. Common chemotherapy drugs used for recurrent rectal cancer include fluorouracil, capecitabine, and oxaliplatin.

Radiation therapy is a treatment that uses high-energy radiation to kill cancer cells. It is often used in combination with chemotherapy to treat recurrent rectal cancer. Radiation therapy can be given externally or internally, depending on the location and extent of the tumor. External radiation therapy uses a machine to deliver radiation to the affected area, while internal radiation therapy uses radioactive implants that are placed near or inside the tumor [4].

Targeted therapy is a treatment that uses drugs or other substances to target specific molecules or proteins that are involved in the growth and spread of cancer cells. It is often used in combination with chemotherapy to treat recurrent rectal cancer. Targeted therapy drugs can be given orally or intravenously, depending on the specific drug and the patient's needs. Common targeted therapy drugs used for recurrent rectal cancer include Regenerate response.

Patients who have achieved a complete response to chemo radiotherapy will typically undergo surgery to remove any remaining cancer cells. The type of surgery will depend on the size and location of the tumor, as well as other factors such as the patient's age and overall health. After surgery, patients will be monitored closely for any signs of cancer recurrence. This may involve regular imaging tests, such as CT scans or MRI scans, as well as blood tests and physical exams. In conclusion, even after a complete response to chemo radiotherapy, there is still a risk of rectal cancer recurrence. Patients will typically undergo surgery to remove any remaining cancer cells, and will be closely monitored for any signs of recurrence. It is important for patients to work closely with their healthcare team to develop a comprehensive treatment plan and to stay vigilant about their follow-up care [5].

## Conclusion

Rectal cancer is a type of cancer that affects the rectum, which is the last part of the large intestine. Chemo radiotherapy is a common treatment for rectal cancer, which involves a combination of chemotherapy and radiation therapy. The goal of this treatment is to shrink the tumor before surgery and increase the chances of a successful outcome. If a patient achieves a complete response to chemo radiotherapy, it means that the tumor has disappeared or become undetectable. However, even after a complete response, there is still a risk of the cancer coming back. This is because cancer cells can sometimes remain in the body, even after treatment.

## References

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