

Bayer cancer drug Stivarga gets Singapore nod

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Singapore: The Health Sciences Authority (HSA) of Singapore has approved Bayer' Stivarga, the first oral targeted therapy proven to extend overall survival in patients with advanced colorectal cancer.

Colorectal cancer remains the most commonly diagnosed form of cancer in Singapore in 2013. It is estimated that 50-to-60 percent of colon cancer patients will develop metastases, the process of cancerous cells spreading to distant tissues. The five-year survival rate of people diagnosed with stage I colorectal cancer, where the tumor is confined to the colon, is 74 percent.

Dr Choo Su Pin, senior consultant and chief of gastrointestinal cancers, Department of Medical Oncology, National Cancer Center, Singapore, said that, "The treatment options for patients with stage IV metastatic colorectal cancer are fairly limited. Hence, any new effective therapy that might give patients more precious time to spend with their loved ones will surely be a welcome addition."

Approved by the US FDA in 2012, Stivarga is proven to extend survival, provide tumor control and keep the cancer from progressing.

According to Mr Thomas Steffen, country division head, Bayer HealthCare, Singapore, Malaysia and Brunei, said that, "The approval of Stivarga in Singapore recognizes the potential benefits it brings to colorectal cancer patients who need more treatment options that can effectively offer them more time with their loved ones."