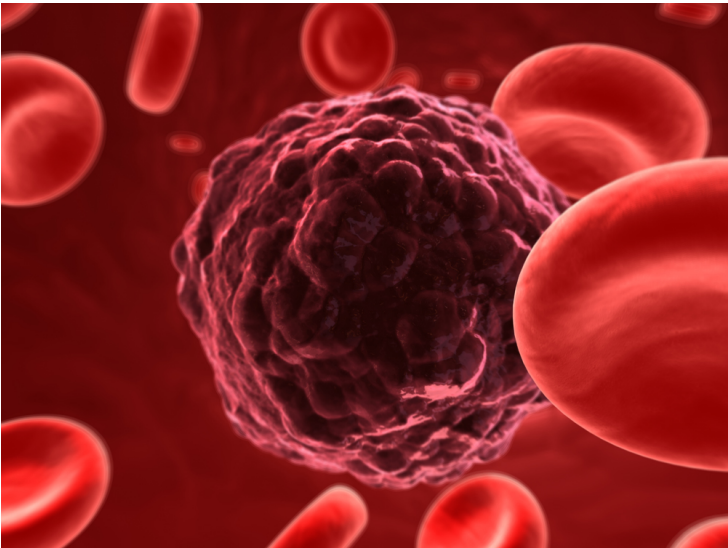


## Singapore approves oral pill for prostate cancer

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### Singapore approves oral treatment for prostate cancer



**Singapore:** For the first time in Singapore, a new oral treatment is available to advanced stage prostate cancer patients in whom the disease has progressed while on, or after chemotherapy. Newly approved by the Health Sciences Authority is the novel, once-daily, oral pill Zytiga (Abiraterone acetate) by Janssen, pharmaceutical company of Johnson&Johnson.

Zytiga has been shown in global clinical trials to extend the survival of patients by 4.6 months. It was also shown to improve the quality of life in patients with metastatic CRPC (where the cancer has spread beyond the prostate gland), after failed docetaxel chemotherapy.

Zytiga works by uniquely blocking an enzyme called CYP17 which is involved in the production of testosterone in the testes, adrenal glands and the tumor itself.

Prostate cancer is the third most common cancer and the 6th leading cause of death among Singaporean men. By 2030, this burden is expected to increase as 1 in 5 Singaporean residents will be aged 65 and above.

Singapore doctors encourage ageing men to seek early medical advice especially if they experience pain, discomfort or other symptoms during urination. It is important that men have an on-going discussion with their health care providers since when prostate cancer is diagnosed early; it is often confined to the prostate gland itself and may be easier to treat. If delayed, the cancer may metastasize, or spread, to other parts of the body such as the bones, lungs and liver.

Dr Chau Noan Minh, a consultant (Medical Oncology) at the National Cancer Centre Singapore, said that the local patients' experience has been largely positive.

"We have observed that the side-effects of abiraterone were well-tolerated, and where they occurred, were manageable. Those patients who responded felt an improvement in their quality of life. Patients now have more treatment options available as a result of this discovery," said Dr Chau.