

Aurora St. Luke's Medical Center
Y-TIL Clinical Research Trial

In March of 2009, Aurora St. Luke's Medical Center became one of the first health care institutions in the world to offer the Young Tumor-Infiltrating Lymphocyte (Y-TIL) clinical trial. The purpose of this study is to research how well laboratory-treated immune system cells (lymphocytes) work in treating patients diagnosed with metastatic melanoma (skin cancer).

This trial, under the direction of John P. Hanson, Jr., M.D. and cleared by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), is a multi-step design that starts with taking blood and removing tumor tissue from the patient.

The laboratory scientists at Aurora St. Luke's Medical Center then begin to diligently work with the tissue collected to separate the lymphocytes from the tumor. These immune system cells, which are pre-programmed to fight the tumor, are then processed in the Cell Therapy Laboratory to multiply into massive amounts of the strongest Y-TIL cells with enhanced tumor fighting capabilities.

About a month from when the tissue samples are taken, the patient is called back to the hospital for a seven day period of receiving chemotherapy and growth factors that enable the body to accept the TIL cells. Finally, the patient undergoes a procedure where doctors re-introduce the cells into the patient's system. After re-introduction, The Y-TIL cells will begin to circulate, persist, and hopefully leave the healthy cells alone while finding the cancerous tumors to shrink and kill them.

While inpatient care is covered by private insurance and/or Medicare, the \$23,500 per-patient laboratory cost of this investigational treatment is not covered by any insurance. For this reason, Dr. Hanson and his team rely on philanthropic support and grants to continue treating the patients from all over that come to Aurora St. Lukes Medical Center for care.

“We are encouraged by this new paradigm of therapy modeled in melanoma with hope of evolving technology to expand to a broader range of malignancies. The Ann's Hope Foundation has been a very generous donor to our research initiative for many years, and we are grateful for their support.” – John P. Hanson, Jr., M.D.

For more information about the Y-TIL clinical trial contact the Immunotherapy Program at 414-649-5818. To find out more about the Aurora Health Care Foundation visit the website www.aurora.org/foundation.