

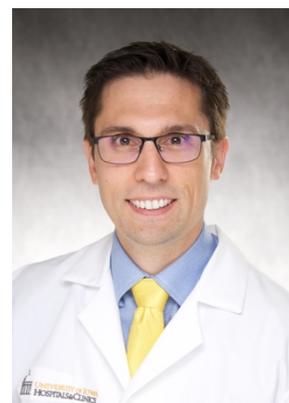
Grant Awarded to Enhance the Efficacy of Chemoradiation for Locally Advanced Esophageal Adenocarcinoma

NEW YORK, Nov. 17, 2022 –[The DeGregorio Family Foundation](#) with support from the Torrey Coast Foundation Gastro Esophageal Investigator Network Initiative ([GEMINI](#)) has awarded \$250,000 to Joseph M. Caster, MD, PhD, and Chandrikha Chandrasekharan, MD, both from The University of Iowa, to enhance the efficacy of chemo and radiation on locally advanced esophageal adenocarcinoma. Esophageal cancer, particularly esophageal adenocarcinoma, has been growing exponentially over the last five decades, especially in the United States. Depending on results, this grant funding could increase up to \$1 million.

Cancers of the esophagus are treated with a combination of chemotherapy, radiation and surgery. While chemo and radiation improve cure rates, they cause long-term side effects and half of all patients still die of their cancer. The goal of this research is to try to improve the treatment of esophageal adenocarcinoma using drugs which increase cure rates while also decreasing the side effects of chemo and radiation.

The grant recipients have identified several promising drugs which accomplish these goals including high-dose vitamin C and avasopasem (a new type of drug called a superoxide dismutase mimic). They recently found that giving high-dose vitamin C and avasopasem at the same time increases the cancer-killing effects of chemo and radiation more than either drug alone in cancer cells grown in the laboratory. They believe that this new drug combination is especially promising for patients with esophageal cancer.

Drs. Caster and Chandrasekharan will ultimately try to prove this by giving high-dose vitamin C and avasopasem along with chemo and radiation in a clinical trial for patients with esophageal cancer. They will also perform experiments in their laboratory to better understand how this combination works and why it affects tumors differently than normal cells.



“This award will allow us to assess a novel approach to redox manipulation that has the potential to improve both cure rates and long-term quality of life for gastroesophageal cancer patients.”

-Dr. Joseph Caster

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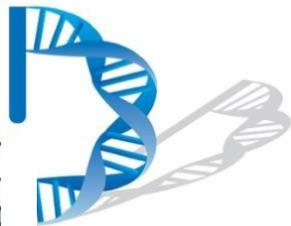
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“This award will provide us with an opportunity to assess a novel approach to redox manipulation that has the potential to improve both cure rates and long-term quality of life for gastroesophageal cancer patients,” said Dr. Caster.

In 2020, gastric and esophageal cancers combined kill over 1.3 million people worldwide. Patients continue to face poor prognoses following gastric and esophageal cancer diagnoses due to their chemo-resistant behavior and ability to metastasize.

The DeGregorio Family Foundation, founded in 2006 after a 10th member of the DeGregorio family died of stomach cancer, has raised almost \$8 million to fund innovative research focused on curing gastric and esophageal cancers. “This grant to Drs. Caster and Chandrasekharan to improve treatment for esophageal cancer, particularly esophageal adenocarcinoma, which is increasing so rapidly in the United States, could make a difference in many lives,” concluded Lynn DeGregorio, President and Founder.



The DeGregorio Family Foundation funds innovative research focused on curing gastric and esophageal cancers—[click here to donate](#) and...

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