

Cancer vaccine may be possibility

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Researchers at the University of Washington and the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Center are working on a vaccine to prevent cancer.

Dr. Mary "Nora" Disis and Vivian Goodell say the vaccine would work like immunizations against infectious diseases, the Seattle Post-Intelligencer reported Friday.

The experimental vaccine is being tested in breast cancer patients who have been treated but remain at high risk of relapse.

"Most patients do mount an immune response to cancer," Disis said. "The question is if those immune responses mean anything."

The medical establishment has long dismissed this type of approach, known as immunotherapy, as bordering on quackery.

However, in the 1990s, Disis and her colleagues were among the first to recognize that breast cancer stimulates an immune response.

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