

Potential new way to slow growth of prostate cancer cells

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(Phys.org)—New insights by WAIMR researchers into how a tiny microRNA molecule may suppress prostate tumours have been published internationally, in the *Journal of Biological Chemistry*.

Dr Keith Giles and Michael Epis, from WAIMR's Laboratory for Hormone Dependent Cancer which is headed by Professor Peter Leedman, worked collaboratively on the paper. They have spent several years investigating the role of a microRNA in [prostate cancer](#).

"We've now confirmed that many prostate cancers contain less of this microRNA molecule, and we have some understanding of how this might occur," explained Dr Giles.

"We've identified a potential mechanism by which the microRNA might control the growth of [prostate cancer cells](#), and we've also found that if we combine it with other cancer drugs in the laboratory then there's a greater suppression of prostate [cancer cell growth](#). The next step is to carry out further work to see if we can develop this finding into something that could improve treatment outcomes for prostate cancer patients in the future," he said.

"Our research suggests that this microRNA normally works as a brake on prostate cell growth, so perhaps if we can put it back into prostate cancer cells then we can restore that brake," Dr Giles said.

"We're continuing to study the functional role of microRNAs in the

control of the growth and progression of cancer cells."

As well as his work on prostate cancer, Dr Giles has been awarded a Royal Perth Hospital Medical Research Foundation fellowship to investigate the role of microRNAs in [malignant melanoma](#).

Provided by Western Australian Institute for Medical Research

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