

Bile Duct Cancer Treatment Reported by Mayo Researchers

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Mayo Clinic researchers have reported that they have developed a promising treatment for patients with bile duct cancer.

Before now, there were no therapeutic options for such patients.

Gregory Gores, MD, a Mayo Clinic liver transplant specialist, and colleagues reported in the May issue of *Liver Transplantation* that they successfully used radiation and chemotherapy prior to liver transplantation in patients with early bile duct cancer. "This protocol represents a highly successful unique therapeutic option for many patients with previously untreatable cholangiocarcinoma," said Dr. Gores in a statement issued by the Mayo Clinic.

In the study, 11 of 19 enrolled patients completed the protocol with a successful liver transplant. Ten of the 11 patients had early-stage disease in their removed livers. The Mayo Clinic said on May 11 that all of the patients who underwent liver transplantation are alive--at least a year following their transplants, with a median follow-up of 44 months. Only one patient had a tumor relapse.

"The current study demonstrates that, for a highly selected group of patients with cholangiocarcinoma, results after the liver transplant plus pretransplant therapy can be very encouraging," Dr. Gores said. Dr. Gores told Reuters news service that there was nothing new about the radiation and chemotherapy that the researchers used. The novelty, he said, was that "we were the first to put them together into a package." Reuters reported.