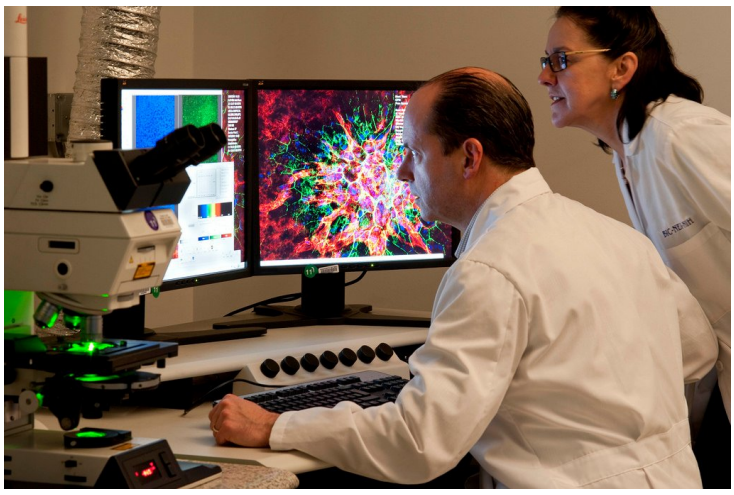
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Researchers use gold nanoparticles against lung cancer

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The scientists discovered properties of the metal that allow its catalytic abilities to be accessed in living things without any side effects.



According to a recent study, tiny flecks of gold could be used in the fight against cancer.

The study was carried out in collaboration with researchers at the University of Zaragoza's Institute of Nanoscience of Aragon in Spain, with funding coming from Cancer Research UK (CRUK), and the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council.

Minute fragments, known as gold nanoparticles, were encased in a chemical device by the research team.

While this has not yet been tested on humans, it is hoped such a device could one day be used to reduce side effects of current chemotherapy treatments by precisely targeting diseased cells without damaging healthy tissue.

Gold is a safe chemical element and has the ability to accelerate, or catalyse, chemical reactions. The scientists discovered properties of the metal that allow these catalytic abilities to be accessed in living things without any side effects.

The device was shown to be effective after being implanted in the brain of a zebrafish, suggesting it can be used in living animals.