

One of the major problems caused by ovarian cancer is bowel obstruction (blockage) and it is important to prevent this complication arising as it is difficult to reverse. In CEBOC, we recruited patients whose ovarian cancer had become resistant to platinum-containing chemotherapy. We had developed a questionnaire to detect patients who were about to develop bowel obstruction and these patients were invited to participate in the trial.

We planned to treat the patients with weekly paclitaxel, a standard chemotherapy option in this situation. However, we knew that drugs, which block blood vessel formation increase the effectiveness of chemotherapy when given with chemotherapy, yet they can also cause bowel damage if given to patients with bowel obstruction caused by cancer. In CEBOC we therefore wanted to test the safety of adding a drug that blocks blood vessel formation, called cediranib, to weekly paclitaxel.

We did not manage to treat the planned number of patients for the trial as the weekly paclitaxel was less effective than we had hoped. So, further studies are needed with this combination. However, in those patients who did receive weekly paclitaxel and cediranib, the combination was safe and patients did not incur bowel damage. The regimen also appeared to be active but because of the smaller numbers of patients in the study we would recommend further evaluation of this regimen