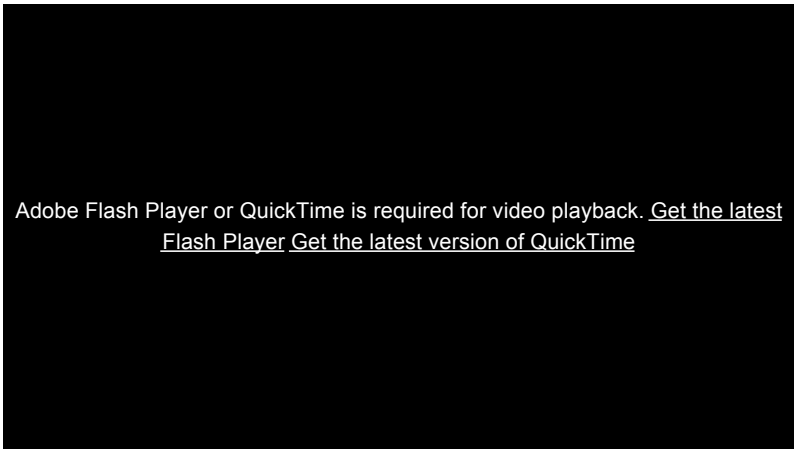
Treating cancer in Africa

Burkitt's Lymphoma, a childhood blood cancer, is rife among the children of Sub-Saharan Africa and accounts for more than 50% of all childhood cancer in the area. This extremely aggressive cancer doubles in size every few days, and is 50 times more common in Africa than it is in the UK. While the cure rate in developed countries is greater than 90%, lower income countries have neither the drugs, nor the supportive care to cope with the toxicity of the cancer treatment currently needed to treat this disease.



At the University of Birmingham, a team of highly skilled researchers have identified another way of treating Burkitt's Lymphoma using a combination of drugs which have been found to have little or no toxicity but a substantial impact on the progression of this cancer.

The generosity of alumni and friends has enabled the research team to complete this first trial, and nearly every single child had a positive response, with their tumour halting growth and even shrinking.

To progress this research, we now need to run a comprehensive programme of clinical trials. We have six centres committed to running trials in Cameroon, Malawi and Ghana. Each centre will run for three years, reaching a total of 540 children.

Professor Chris Bunce, Lead Researcher, School of Biosciences: "We are really pleased with the results. Next we will explore a different drug combination and if this is successful, will combine the two to hopefully create the most effective treatment."

This research will have wide reaching impact in the following areas:

In Africa: This treatment has the potential to revolutionise the way in which Burkitt's Lymphoma is treated in Sub-Saharan Africa, curing more children and giving them a far greater quality of life while having the treatment. In the short term, the treatment will benefit children for whom chemotherapy has failed, but in the long term, this treatment could replace chemotherapy completely.

In society: While much of this research is focused on developing countries, increasing our knowledge in the treatment of blood cancers can only benefit those who live with this condition in the UK.

At the University of Birmingham: This research will add to the already rich base of blood cancer research, adding another tool to the armoury of University researchers and clinicians.

Inspired?

With your support, our researchers can make these trials a reality.

£5 a month would fund much needed drugs for a child in sub-Saharan Africa for a whole year.

£12 a month could fund a individual child in Malawi through this vital trail.

Donate online today (https://bhamalumni.org/NetCommunity/SSLPage.aspx?pid=210&frcrId=1) or contact **Laura Fairbanks (mailto:giving@contacts.bham.ac.uk)** [+44(0)121 414 8894].