

New treatment offers kidney cancer hope

EXCLUSIVE
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MEDICAL EDITOR

PATIENTS with inoperable kidney cancer may now have access to a potential cure thanks to a new treatment being pioneered at the Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre.

The centre is working with a collaborative consortium of 12 international institutes across five countries and their latest paper was published online on Wednesday by the journal *Lancet Oncology*.

It is the result of a five-year study that includes 35 Victorian patients.

The paper outlines the con-



Ian Carnegie with wife Carol.
Picture: Jason Edwards

sortium's investigation into using a highly precise form of radiotherapy – known as Stereotactic Ablative Body Radiotherapy (SABR) – to treat primary renal cell carcinoma (kidney cancer).

The lead author is the Peter

Mac's Shankar Siva who said "hands down" this was the most exciting achievement in his career.

Associate Professor Siva is leading the team and says before this study it was widely thought that radiotherapy would have little effect on kidney cancers. He said the 35 Peter Mac patients all had inoperable kidney cancer and had been offered SABR as a non-invasive treatment.

The *Lancet Oncology* paper was an assessment of whether SABR can work as well in the long-term in these kidney cancer patients as has been shown in early-stage lung cancer.

"This is a remarkable new treatment option, as patients with inoperable kidney cancer, particularly larger cancers, have few options for cure," Prof Siva says.

"We can offer surgery as the first line of treatment but this is not suitable for all patients. It is really nice to be able to offer this to those patients, although currently it is a niche treatment because it is highly technically advanced.

"Our goal is to try to improve access to SABR for kidney cancer patients worldwide."

Prof Siva says the incidence of renal cell carcinoma is rising, especially in patients aged

over 70, triggered in some by obesity, high blood pressure and smoking.

He says "excitingly" targeting kidney cancers with SABR has been shown to effectively eradicate tumours, prevent spread and trigger long-term remissions in patients.

Melbourne grandfather Ian Carnegie, 72, is one of the first patients to undergo the SABR treatment.

"I didn't really know what to expect but I had no problems at all," Mr Carnegie said.

"I was well enough to travel home on public transport afterwards." He described the treatment as straight forward.
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More calls for end to roo cull

IAN ROYALL

WILDLIFE Victoria is calling for an immediate end to the state's kangaroo cull because of the impact of the recent devastating floods leaving many joeys isolated and vulnerable.

The animal welfare group said that while the government was advising the public on what to do with animals disrupted by the floods, it also sanctioned the statewide cull, known as the Kangaroo Harvesting Program.

Wildlife Victoria said native animal losses would be widespread because of the deluge and persistent standing water, with many animals exhausted and wet.

The organisation received an average of 500 calls per day at the peak of the flood crisis in October. Of those calls, about 45 per cent were for Eastern Grey Kangaroos.

"The ongoing impact to kangaroos in flood-affected regions will be seen for years to come with an entire generation of at-foot and in-pouch joeys estimated to have been lost," Wildlife Victoria chief executive Lisa Palma said.

Up to 35,000 kangaroos would be killed by the end of the year in the harvesting program in flood-affected regions in Central and North East Victoria, she said.

"We're urging the state government to end its controversial Kangaroo Harvesting Program," Ms Palma said.

"This is a state election issue for many voters. Victorians don't want our beautiful kangaroos and joeys killed by for-profit hunters."

The roo program is run by the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning which said it was considering suspending it. The program has a quota of more than 127,000 roos this year.

NEW CHALLENGE FOR MOWVEMBER



Bradley Brown is attempting a lawnmowing world record for Movember. Picture: Tony Gough

GRACE BALDWIN

THE new way to man up for Movember is to open up and talk, but one man is doing both – while also trying to break a world record in lawn mowing.

Bradley Brown has been involved

in Movember for a decade, each year attempting a new feat to raise awareness for the cause.

This year, Mr Brown will be attempting to break the Guinness Book of World Records' current record for the farthest distance pushing a lawnmower in 24 hours.

He said after initially getting involved in Movember as a means to bring his community together, his motivation for participation has morphed into helping older generations to know and understand health concerns.

"I'm doing this work as an

advocate for men's physical and mental health," Mr Brown said.

The world record attempt will kick off at 8am on Wednesday November 16 and will conclude at 8am the next day. He hopes to raise \$40,000 for Movember.

worldrecordattempt.com.au/donate

Margot: 'I could've been hurt'

MARGOT Robbie has slammed paparazzi, saying she could have been hurt during an alleged confrontation outside a swanky Argentina restaurant.

Robbie, 32, and actress Cara Delevingne, 30, were in Buenos Aires with two British filmmakers in October when they were photographed as they left a restaurant in the early hours of the morning.

In an interview with *Vanity Fair*, Robbie was asked if she

was hurt in the altercation.

"No, but I could have been," she said, adding that ongoing legal issues prevented her from saying more.

Robbie's business partner, *Wolf of Wall Street* producer Josey McNamara, and filmmaker Jac Rhys Hopkins, were arrested over the alleged assault of photographer Pedro Alberto Orquera, according to a police report obtained by the *Herald Sun*.

Robbie told *Vanity Fair* that there were no rules protecting public figures internationally like she had in Los Angeles, adding her family in Australia had been in dangerous situations when being chased by photographers.

"If my mum dies in a car accident because you wanted a photo of me going in the grocery shop, or you knock my nephew off a bike – for what? For a photo?" she said.



Actors Cara Delevingne and Margot Robbie.

Dope danger for lungs

OTTAWA: Cannabis may do more harm to a smoker's lungs and airways than tobacco, a new study says.

Researchers from the University of Ottawa and Ottawa Hospital looked at chest X-rays of 56 cannabis smokers, 57 non-smokers and 33 people who smoked only tobacco between 2005 and 2020. They found higher rates of airway inflammation and emphysema – a chronic lung

disease – among regular cannabis smokers compared to regular tobacco-only smokers and non-smokers.

"Marijuana smoking is on the rise and there's a public perception that marijuana is safe, or that it's safer than (tobacco) cigarettes," Giselle Revah, a radiologist at Ottawa Hospital, where the research was conducted, said. "But this study raises concerns that this may not be true."

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