

Tangerine peel could help fight cancer**REUTERS**

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Tangerine peel could help in the fight against certain cancers, researchers said on Wednesday.

Human cancer cells, which contain an enzyme called P450 CYP1B1, were destroyed by a compound contained in tangerine peel, Salvestrol Q40, scientists at Leicester School of Pharmacy found.

The findings may offer a new approach to uncovering a treatment for cancers such as breast, lung, prostate and ovarian cancer, the scientists said.

Medicinal chemist Dr. Hoon L. Tan said: "It is very exciting to find a compound in food that can target cancers specifically.

"Salvestrols may offer a new mechanism of dietary anti-cancer action.

"Indeed, the depletion of salvestrols in the modern diet is due to the fact that many people no longer eat the skin of fruits and this may be a major contributory factor to the increasing incidence of some cancers in the human population."

The breakthrough was being presented at the British Pharmaceutical Conference held in Manchester.

But he warned that the research was still in its early days and many tests will be needed before reaching the clinical trial stage, which could take between five and seven years.

The researchers have formed a private company, Nature's Defence Investments, to protect and promote their research, with the potential of designing a natural anti-cancer alternative based on the new technology.

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