

Broccoli compound can kill cancer

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Broccoli is packed with a cancer fighting compound. Photo / Thinkstock
A compound found in cruciferous vegetables like broccoli could prevent a cancer that affects children, researchers have found.

The compound - called sulforaphane - could prevent and even treat solid tumours. Previous studies have found cruciferous veggies lower the risk of certain types of cancer.

In the new study, researchers from Baylor College of Medicine found sulforaphane could tackle acute lymphoblastic leukemia.

"Acute lymphoblastic leukemia is a type of cancer of the white blood cells common in children, said Daniel Lacorazza, assistant professor of pathology and immunology.

"There is about an 80 per cent cure rate, but some children don't respond to treatment. For those cases we are in need of alternative treatment."

Researchers isolated the compound from the veggies and mixed it with cancer cells obtained from people with the disease. Healthy cells were also mixed with the sulforaphane as a control, according to health website *Medical Daily*.

Results showed the compound killed cancer cells without affecting the healthy ones.

Later studies on mice also found the compound destroyed cancer cells.

Prof Lacorazza said the compound reacts with certain proteins, however more research is needed.

"There have been definitive studies showing how this compound interacts with blood cancers," he said.

"Sulforaphane is a natural product. However, what we used in this study is a concentrated purified form. So while eating cruciferous vegetables is good for you, it will not have the same

effect as what we saw in this lab."

The study is published in the journal *Plos One*.

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