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LOS ANGELES, CA, United States (UPI) -- University of Southern California scientists say a close structural relative of the COX-2 inhibitor celecoxib (Celebrex) is a potent tumor fighter.

Led by Axel Schönthal, associate professor of molecular microbiology and immunology, the USC researchers studied the effects of an analog of celecoxib that does not have its cousin's celebrated ability to block the activity of cyclooxygenase-2 (COX-2), an enzyme integral to the inflammatory process.

Nonetheless, the scientists showed the analog manages to halt tumor growth even in drug-resistant lines of multiple myeloma cells. Multiple myeloma is an incurable cancer of plasma cells; which are components of the blood, and play a key role in the body's immune response.

The work was published in the most recent online edition of the journal Blood, and will be appear in an upcoming print edition of the journal.

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