# 'Reduce and Remove' Trimodality Strategy for Advanced Liver Cancer: the START-FIT approach

**Principal Investigator:** Professor Albert Chan Chi-Yan

## Technology

Advanced liver cancer is generally not curable, unless reduced to a treatable stage through conversion therapy and surgically removed. We explored a new approach combining locoregional therapies and immune checkpoint inhibitors to achieve this conversion in patients with inoperable liver cancer. This innovative 'cocktail' strategy, the **START-FIT** approach, merges three different treatments: **S**equential **T**rans**A**rterial chemoembolization (TACE) and stereotactic beam **R**adio**T**herapy (SBRT) **F**ollowed by **I**mmuno**T**herapy (IO). Remarkably, over half of the patients in this trial eventually underwent curative surgery or had a complete response to treatment. The START-FIT approach has shown significant effectiveness in treating advanced, inoperable hepatocellular carcinoma.

## Opportunities

- New hope for poor liver cancer prognosis, with third highest cancer-related mortality rate globally
- Ease of implementation in tertiary centres across the world

## Key Advantages

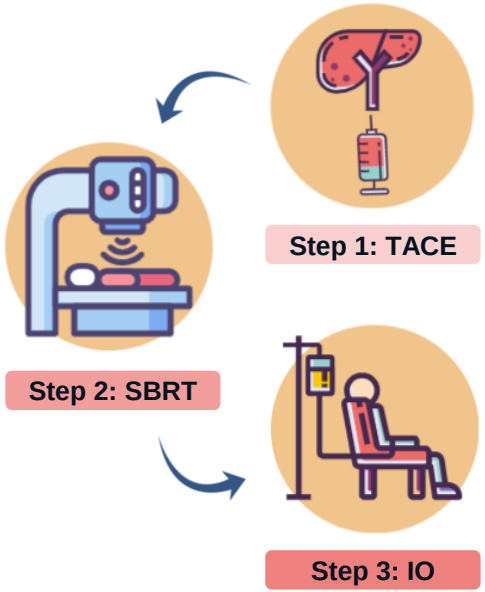
- Innovative combination strategy with curative intent
- Safe and low toxicity treatment for all including the elderly
- A well-tolerated outpatient based treatment for 6 months
- Prolongs life while maintaining quality of life

## Stage of Development

- US patent application submitted 2023
- Established combination strategy for treating locally advanced HCC as standard clinical practice in Hong Kong

## Intellectual Property

US Patent Application Number: 18/538,932, filed December 2023




## Contact

infottu@hku.hk

LKS Faculty of Medicine Technology Transfer Unit
香港大學李嘉誠醫學院技術轉移部