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| |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | |  | |  | | --- | | This press release is copyright Macmillan Publishers Limited. Its use is granted only for journalists and news media receiving it directly from Nature Research. Full terms and conditions can be [found here.](http://track.nature.com/track/click/30195101/press.nature.com?p=eyJzIjoiQmwxLTl1T3UyU1VwM19uSFhlSkRURm9JU3FnIiwidiI6MSwicCI6IntcInVcIjozMDE5NTEwMSxcInZcIjoxLFwidXJsXCI6XCJodHRwOlxcXC9cXFwvcHJlc3MubmF0dXJlLmNvbVxcXC90ZXJtcy1hbmQtY29uZGl0aW9uc1xcXC9cIixcImlkXCI6XCJhZTNlYjQ4YjExYmU0M2Y0OTM0YmJhYzk4NWE3OGYyOFwiLFwidXJsX2lkc1wiOltcImRiOTAzNmNkMDhjYmM0ZDc5N2Q4NWNiNjI5YThlYTJmMTU1M2YzOTdcIl19In0)  The best contacts for stories will always be the authors, but the editor who handled a paper may be available for comment if an author is unobtainable. Please get in touch with Nature Research's [press contacts](#contacts) as listed below with any editorial enquiry.  We take great care not to hype the papers mentioned on our press releases. If you ever consider that a story has been hyped, please do not hesitate to contact us at [press@nature.com](mailto:press@nature.com), citing the specific example. | |  | |

***Nature Communications***  
[[1] Cancer: Evidence of evolving resistance to Tasmanian devil facial tumours \*PRESS BRIEFING & IMAGE\*](http://track.nature.com/track/click/30195101/press.nature.com?p=eyJzIjoiZ1VZZ2poYUxnc0tYcTJvcWJoNHExMFV5TXpNIiwidiI6MSwicCI6IntcInVcIjozMDE5NTEwMSxcInZcIjoxLFwidXJsXCI6XCJodHRwOlxcXC9cXFwvcHJlc3MubmF0dXJlLmNvbVxcXC8_cG9zdF90eXBlPXByZXNzX3JlbGVhc2UmcD01NjE0OSZXVC5lY19pZD1QUkVTU1wiLFwiaWRcIjpcImFlM2ViNDhiMTFiZTQzZjQ5MzRiYmFjOTg1YTc4ZjI4XCIsXCJ1cmxfaWRzXCI6W1wiZGI5MDM2Y2QwOGNiYzRkNzk3ZDg1Y2I2MjlhOGVhMmYxNTUzZjM5N1wiXX0ifQ)  
  
Tasmanian devils may be evolving to resist an aggressive cancer known as devil facial tumour disease, reports a study published in Nature Communications this week.  
  
The population of Tasmanian devils (Sarcophilus harrisii) has been reduced by more than 80% over the last two decades due to a transmissible cancer, devil facial tumour disease, which in most cases is fatal. Modelling of the disease has suggested that the animals would near extinction; however, in populations predicted to be extinct by now some animal are still present.  
  
Andrew Storfer and colleagues studied the genetics of Tasmanian devils from multiple distinct geographic sites both before and after the disease presented. They found two genomic regions that differ in pre- and post-disease samples. Five of the seven genes in these regions are known to be associated with cancer and immune function in humans.  
  
These findings suggest that Tasmanian devils, in a short period of time — between 4-6 generations — are rapidly evolving to resist devil facial tumour disease.  
  
**Press Briefing**  
  
\*\*Please note that a telephone press briefing will take place UNDER STRICT EMBARGO on Friday 26 August at 1500 London time (BST) / 1000 US Eastern Time.\*\* Authors Andrew Storfer, Paul Hohenlohe and Brendan Epstein will discuss the research. This will be followed by a Q&A session.  
  
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**DOI:** 10.1038/ncomms12684  
**Corresponding Author:**  
Andrew Storfer  
Washington State University, Pullman, Washington, United States  
Email: [astorfer@wsu.edu](mailto:astorfer@wsu.edu) Tel: +1 509 335 7922  
  
  
Please link to the article in online versions of your report (the URL will go live after the embargo ends): <http://nature.com/articles/doi:10.1038/ncomms12684>

**Image 1**

Tasmanian Devil. Credit: Menna Jones

**Recording of the Nature Communications press briefing relating to this paper**

If you are having problems listening to the recording, please download the MP3 by right-clicking the "download mp3 file" link and selecting save as.