Researchers at UCLA are studying a drug they hope will treat methamphetamine addiction, The Huffington Post reports.

In a small study, the drug, Ibudilast, appeared to be safe and eased meth addiction.

The study included 11 people addicted to meth who were not seeking treatment. Some received the drug, and others got a placebo. The trial was the first of three phases of human testing required by the Food and Drug Administration for approval. It was meant to evaluate the safety of the drug taken in combination with meth, the article notes.

"Very preliminary results would indicate that Ibudilast may dampen craving and improve cognitive functioning," said Dr. Aimee Swanson, co-investigator on the trial and research director at the UCLA Center for Behavioral and Addiction Medicine.

There are currently no drugs approved to treat meth addiction, the article notes. Counseling, in-patient rehabilitation or 12-Step groups often are not effective in treating meth addiction, Swanson said.

"When we see people come to participate in the trial, it's really their last resort," Swanson said. "Many of them can no longer hold down a job, they have strained relationships with family members. Gone went the cars, gone went the business, gone went the house, gone went the kids. The main focus of this person's life is using meth."

Swanson noted Ibudilast may prevent activation of central nervous system cells called glial cells that have been linked to drug dependence. "When you're on meth, your whole brain is saying, 'I need meth,'" she said. "If you could block meth from interfering with glial, it would allow the messages that you would like to be sending and receiving to actually get to your brain."

The study took place in a hospital unit, which participants were not allowed to leave for three weeks. They received intravenous injections of meth two to three times per week while they were treated with Ibudilast.

The researchers will now move on to further testing, which will be funded by the National Institute on Drug Abuse, according to the article.