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Oxford University develops blood test to detect cancer and metastasis

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This new test is not specific to a single cancer type



A University of Oxford study outlines a new type of blood test that can be used to detect a range of cancers and whether these cancers have spread (metastasised) in the body.

The study analysed samples from 300 patients with non-specific but concerning symptoms of cancer, such as fatigue and weight loss, who were recruited through the Oxfordshire Suspected CANcer (SCAN) pathway.

The researchers assessed whether the test could distinguish patients with a range of solid tumours from those without cancer. Their results show that cancer was correctly detected in 19 out of every 20 patients with cancer using this test. In those with cancer, metastatic disease was identified with an overall accuracy of 94%.

These results make this the first technology to be able to determine the metastatic status of a cancer from a simple blood test, without prior knowledge of the primary cancer type.

This test shows promise to help clinicians detect cancer and assess cancer stage in the future.

Future studies with larger patient cohorts will further evaluate this technique for the earlier detection of new cancers and potential clinical applications.