HEALTHY TIPS

Groundbreaking: Single Blood Test that can Detect 50 Types of Cancer Is Accurate enough to be Released

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A simple blood test capable of detecting more than 50 cancer types prior to any signs of the illness appearing in the person is now accurate enough to be rolled out as a test for screening, explain the scientists.

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Currently under a pilot program at NHS England, this test is designed for people that have a higher likelihood of the illness like people at the age of 50 or older.

It's a blood test capable of identifying several types of cancer that aren't easy to diagnose in the early phases like ovarian, head and neck, pancreatic, some blood cancers, and esophageal.

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Single Test that can Detect Various Cancer Types

According to the scientists' findings that are published in the *Annals of Oncology* journal, this test detects cancer often before signs develop and has a low false-positive rate.

Developed by Grail, a company in the US, this test works by detecting chemical changes in parts of the genetic code–cell-free DNA– that leak from tumors into the blood.

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They developed it using a machine learning algorithm which is a type of AI. It examines the DNA released by the tumors.

Its focus is on the chemical changes of this DNA, i.e. the methylation patterns.

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Newest Findings Show It Has an Impressively High Accuracy

According to the newest analysis, this test has a high level of accuracy. This was discovered by tracking its performance in tests done on 2823 people with this illness and 1,254 without it.

The blood test identified cancer presence in 51.5 percent of the cases, throughout all of the disease's stages. It had wrong detections in only 0.5 percent of cases.

Moreover, in the solid tumors without screening options like liver, pancreatic, and esophageal cancer, the test's capacity to generate a positive test result was twice as high as that for the solid tumors with screening options like bowel, prostate, and breast cancer.

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The test's overall capacity for a positive test result in blood cancers was 55.1 percent.

It also accurately identified the tissue where the cancer was in the body in 88.7 percent of the cases.

A Major Chance to Lower the Burden from Cancer

According to the study's first author, Dr. Eric Klein, early detection of cancer when the likelihood of treatment working is a major chance to lower the burden cancer causes.

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Klein added that these findings point out that if this test is used with other screening tests, it may profoundly impact how cancer is diagnosed and consequently, help better public health.

Since the false positives are low, misdiagnoses are brought to a minimum. The results from the test's pilot by NHS with 140,000 participants are expected by 2023.

Sources:

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