Measuring circulating DNA levels could provide non-invasive tool for lung cancer prognosis.

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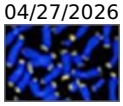

The level of circulating DNA in a cancer patient may positively correlate with the likelihood of the cancer to spread, report researchers from the Polytechnic University of Valencia. They describe the study from which they drew this conclusion in an article in the *Journal of Thoracic Oncology*. The subjects of the study all had been diagnosed with advanced non-small cell lung carcinoma. Before beginning chemotherapy with cisplatin and docetaxel, researchers estimated the levels of freely circulating DNA by measuring the amount of an enzyme, human telomerase reverse transcriptase (hTERT). Patients with higher levels of hTERT prior to treatment had an overall higher incidence of the lung cancer spread (metastasis), and lower overall survival. Researchers suggest the non-invasive, inexpensive nature of hTERT measurement may allow improved efficacy of lung cancer prognosis.

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