Blood test may reduce cost and increase accuracy of predicting melanoma's chances of spreading.

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According to the American Association for Cancer Research, 68,130 people in the U.S. were diagnosed with melanoma in 2010, and 8,700 died of the disease. The majority of these deaths were the result of metastasis, when the cancer spreads to distant parts of the body. A new study published out of Yale University shows some promising preliminary studies, which indicate a blood test that may be able to better predict a patient’s risk of metastasis. The test found several biomarkers that correlated with an increased risk, and although these results still require further testing, they offer hope for better predicting a patient’s chance of advanced disease. If successful, this test could also reduce the cost of treatment, which is currently augmented by the present standard of care: frequent imaging tests, physical exams, and blood tests.

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