

# Food Dyes Can Stain Cancer As Well As Fingers!

Printed from <https://www.cancerquest.org/newsroom/2020/09/food-dyes-can-stain-cancer-well-fingers> on 04/06/2026



Researchers at the University of Southern California have discovered how to use common dyes such as tattoo ink and food coloring to improve the detection of cancer. When attached to tiny bead-like objects, the dyes move through the blood and collect in tumors. They can 'light up' tumors, allowing medical scanners to get more accurate images.

After looking at several different ones, the researchers decided that common food dyes, such as coloring used in candy, may be best for detection because they are known to not harm the body. These dyes have already been approved by the FDA, making it easier to get them approved for use in cancer detection.

Source

<https://viterbischool.usc.edu/news/2020/08/using-tattoo-ink-to-find-cancer/>

Learn More

[Learn More About Cancer Detection and Diagnosis](#)