

Information from genetic tests for cancer not always useful for patient

Genetic tests for cancer have come a long way since they first entered the clinic...Yet many patients learn that their cancers have mutations for which no drug exists. In fact, the roles many of these genetic changes play in cancer growth are poorly understood.

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[T]here are several obstacles to further progress. Finding a genetic abnormality in a cancer is not enough—the aberration must be integral to the cancer's growth and survival...[R]esearchers also need to know which mutations tend to act later on.

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Defining cancer not only by its body part but also its genes is prying treatment options loose from old restrictions. A drug conventionally used for one cancer may turn out to work in another driven by the same abnormality.

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These and other efforts augur well for future improvements in genetically customized care for cancer patients. At present, however, they are dogged by skepticism about how quickly they will lead to meaningful changes....For now[,] the gulf between the promise of precision medicine and the reality remains frustratingly large.

The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion and analysis. Read full, original post: [Why Gene Tests for Cancer Don't Offer More Answers](#)