

'Cheap and simple' 10-minute blood test can detect traces of cancer

Scientists have developed a universal cancer test that can detect traces of the disease in a patient's bloodstream.

The cheap and simple test uses a colour-changing fluid to reveal the presence of malignant cells anywhere in the body and provides results in less than 10 minutes.

While the test is still in development, it draws on a radical new approach to cancer detection that could make routine screening for the disease a simple procedure for doctors.

"A major advantage of this technique is that it is very cheap and extremely simple to do, so it could be adopted in the clinic quite easily," said [researcher] Laura Carrascosa.

...

The test has a sensitivity of about 90%, meaning it would detect about 90 in 100 cases of cancer. It would serve as an initial check for cancer, with doctors following up positive results with more focused investigations.

"Our technique could be a screening tool to inform clinicians that a patient may have a cancer, but they would require subsequent tests with other techniques to identify the cancer type and stage," Carrascosa said.

The test was made possible by the Queensland team's discovery that cancer DNA and normal DNA stick to metal surfaces in markedly different ways. This allowed them to develop a test that distinguishes between healthy cells and cancerous ones, even from the tiny traces of DNA that find their way into the bloodstream.

Read full, original post: [Scientists develop 10-minute universal cancer test](#)