

Targeted testing offers treatment hope for ovarian cancer patients

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Women with ovarian cancer could be helped by a new test that identifies the specific type of tumour they have, a conference will hear this week.

Researchers at the University of Edinburgh hope this improved diagnosis will help doctors to personalise treatment programmes so that patients receive the most effective drugs.

The Edinburgh team worked with scientists from Ireland to identify six subgroups of the disease, each of which had a different [genetic signature](#)

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To do this, they analysed [tissue samples](#) from more than 350 ovarian cancer patients and compared this information with the patients' medical records.

The results show how genetic profiling of [ovarian cancers](#) might predict a person's response to drug treatments.

Researchers say the development may be particularly helpful for women with an aggressive form of ovarian cancer, which is typically caught late by current [diagnostic tests](#).

This type of aggressive – or 'high grade' – cancer can respond well to a recently-developed drug that targets the blood supply of the cancer cells.

The team hopes that by identifying the women with this type of cancer at

the earliest opportunity, they could use the drug more effectively and help to improve survival rates.

The findings will be presented at the American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO) conference, being held in Chicago this week.

Dr Charlie Gourley of the University of Edinburgh, who led the study, said: "This research shows that by conducting a detailed analysis of the genes of ovarian cancers we may be able to identify those patients who will respond well to new drug treatments. This could bring valuable improvements in survival rates for the disease and would help us to personalise a patient's care to ensure the greatest possible success."

[Ovarian cancer](#) is the fifth most common cancer in women, with around 6,800 women being diagnosed every year in the UK.

Of these, nearly two-thirds will not live beyond five years of their diagnosis.

Chemotherapy and surgery can be effective treatments, but women could have a greater chance of surviving the disease if it is identified earlier on.

The findings will be presented at ASCO on Saturday 4th June.

Provided by University of Edinburgh

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