

Major advanced cancer study to be led by Uppsala University

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Several prominent cancer researchers are now joining forces in an advanced new cancer study. The goal is to understand which tumors will be difficult to treat and to find out why certain cancer drugs lose their effect after a period of use. The study is to be directed by Tobias Sjöblom, associate professor of tumor biology at Uppsala University, Sweden.

The study involves a hundred [cancer patients](#), suffering from either cancer of the large intestine or chronic lymphatic [leukemia](#). Samples will be taken from patients both before and after drug treatment. The aim is to find out what makes so many tumors resistant to treatment – a major problem in [cancer](#) care today.

"With this initiative we will have a unique opportunity to study the development of tumors up close. Several research teams will examine the samples using different analytical methods in order to get an overall picture," says Tobias Sjöblom, associate professor of tumor biology at Uppsala University and director of the study.

What lies behind this resistance is not known today, but it is assumed to emerge when the [tumor](#) changes over time, mutates. This also alters the original approach to treatment. In the study scientists will be looking for mutations in all the genes in the tumors.

The study is to be performed by Uppsala scientists together with colleagues from the Royal Institute of Technology, the Swedish

University of Agricultural Sciences, and Umeå University. It is made possible by funding from SciLifeLab, a total of SEK 4.5 million over two years. All analyses will be done at SciLifeLab, which is a national resource center for medical and bioscience research.

"This is a model for how we want to work with large projects within SciLifeLab. Researchers receiving funding from us have access to our resources in the form of technologically advanced equipment and competence, while their own expertise in the specific research field ensures that the right questions are being asked. This enables us to generate new knowledge about diseases more quickly," says Kerstin Lindblad-Toh, director of SciLifeLab Uppsala.

This type of research is also of interest to the pharmaceuticals industry.

"The industry will have an opportunity to assess the effect of their drugs, and we hope this will provide greater insights into how we can predict how different patients will react to a certain medicine in the future," says Tobias Sjöblom.

Provided by Uppsala University

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