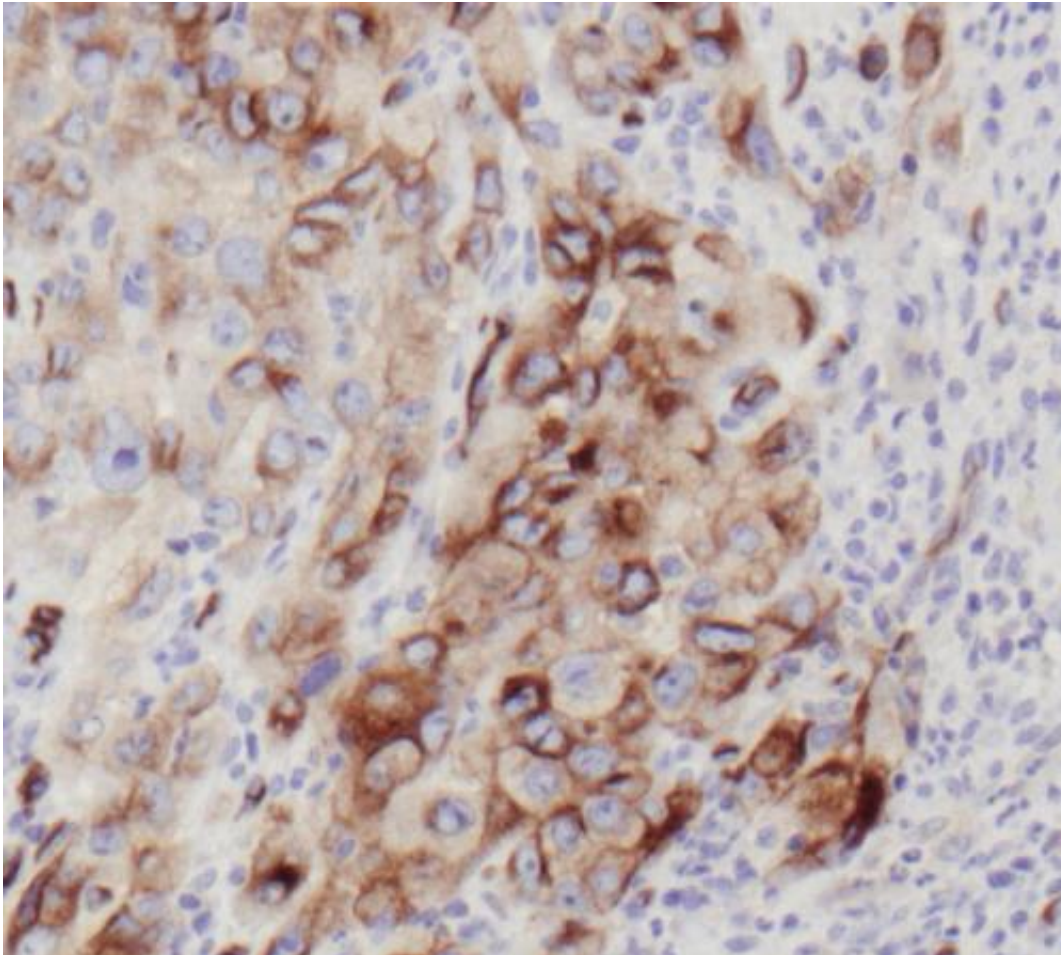


Key find for early bladder cancer treatment

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Aggressive forms of bladder cancer involve the protein PODXL – a discovery that could hold the key to improved treatment, according to researchers at Lund University, Uppsala University and KTH in Sweden.

"With better knowledge of this protein, we can better determine a patient's prognosis and see who needs more [aggressive treatment](#) immediately and who can be given a milder treatment without a risk to their life. We can see at an early stage which patients are in the risk zone for cancer recurrence", said Karolina Boman, a doctoral student at the Division of Pathology at Lund University.

The study involved almost 500 men and women between the ages of 39 and 90. The patients with tumours containing the protein podocalyxin-like, PODXL, had an increased risk of a [cancer recurrence](#) or of dying of the disease within two years – even in cases that were discovered early and only had superficial tumours.

"We have previously shown that the presence of this protein in the cell membrane of patients with colorectal cancer increases the risk of recurrence or of dying of the disease. Now we have seen the same thing in patients with [bladder cancer](#).

The prognosis is poor even if the protein is only present in low concentrations", said Karolina Boman.

The researchers believe that the new findings about this protein could also be of use for other forms of cancer.

"We can no doubt utilise this for example for pancreatic cancer, [colon cancer](#) and [ovarian cancer](#). It could also save society a lot of money, especially if in the future we could see which tumours contain the protein using a simple urine test. That is what we are going to look at now", said Karolina Boman.

More information: Boman, K. et al. Membranous expression of podocalyxin-like protein is an independent factor of poor prognosis in urothelial bladder cancer, *British Journal of Cancer* online 7 May 2013.

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