

# Researchers track lethal prostate cancer to determine clonal origin

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Prostate cancer has variable manifestations, ranging from relatively benign localized tumors to widespread life-threatening metastases. The origin of most prostate cancer metastases can be traced back to the primary tumor; therefore, understanding the mutations in the primary tumor that promote cancer spread is of great interest.

In this issue of the *Journal of Clinical Investigation*, Srinivasan Yegnasubramanian and colleagues at Johns Hopkins University track the development of lethal [prostate cancer](#) in a patient. Using tissue samples taken throughout the progression of the cancer, the authors identified the origin of the lethal clone. Surprisingly, in this case the lethal clone originated from a small, low-grade foci in the [primary tumor](#) and not from the larger high-grade region of the tumor.

In the accompanying commentary, Rose Brannon and Charles Sawyers of Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center discuss the importance of individual case studies and how a comprehensive database of such studies is needed to identify common patterns in [cancer progression](#).

**More information:** Tracking the clonal origin of lethal prostate cancer, *J Clin Invest.* [DOI: 10.1172/JCI70354](https://doi.org/10.1172/JCI70354)

"N of 1" case reports in the era of whole-genome sequencing, *J Clin Invest.* 2013;123(11):4568–4570. [DOI: 10.1172/JCI70935](https://doi.org/10.1172/JCI70935)

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