

Multicancer early detection blood tests are feasible, study suggests

October 9 2023, by Elana Gotkine



Multicancer early detection (MCED) blood tests are feasible for

detecting cancer, according to a study published online Oct. 5 in *The Lancet*.

Deb Schrag, M.D., from the Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center in New York City, and colleagues conducted a [prospective cohort study](#) to examine the feasibility of MCED testing for cancer screening in a convenience sample of adults aged 50 years or older without signs or symptoms of cancer. A total of 6,662 participants were recruited between Dec. 12, 2019, and Dec. 4, 2020; 6,621 had analyzable results.

The researchers detected a cancer signal in 1.4% of participants with analyzable results. Of these, 38% were diagnosed with cancer (true positives) and 62% had no [cancer diagnosis](#) ([false positives](#)). The median time to diagnostic resolution was 79 days: 57 and 162 days in true-positive and false-positive participants, respectively.

Most of the participants had [laboratory tests](#) (79 and 88% with true-positive and false-positive results, respectively) and imaging (91 and 93%, respectively). In participants with false-positive results, fewer procedures were conducted than in those with true-positive results (30 versus 82%).

"Although this study establishes clinical feasibility of MCED testing, forthcoming results of larger studies will be required to show clinical utility and effects on cancer mortality," the authors write.

More information: Deb Schrag et al, Blood-based tests for multicancer early detection (PATHFINDER): a prospective cohort study, *The Lancet* (2023). [DOI: 10.1016/S0140-6736\(23\)01700-2](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(23)01700-2)

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Citation: Multicancer early detection blood tests are feasible, study suggests (2023, October 9)
retrieved 28 April 2024 from
<https://medicalxpress.com/news/2023-10-multicancer-early-blood-feasible.html>

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