



# Exciting results from blood test for 50 cancers

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A blood test for more than 50 types of cancer could help speed up diagnosis, according to a new study.

Results of a trial in North America show that the test was able to identify a wide range of cancers, of which three-quarters don't have any form of screening programme.



More than half the cancers were detected at an early stage, where they are easier to treat and potentially curable.

The Galleri test, made by American pharmaceutical firm Grail, can detect fragments of cancerous DNA that have broken off a tumour and are circulating in the blood.

The trial followed 25,000 adults from the US and Canada over a year.

Nearly one in 100 of those tested had a positive result and in 62% of these cases cancer was later confirmed.



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Crucially, three-quarters of cancers detected were those which have no screening programme such as ovarian, liver, stomach, bladder and pancreatic cancer.

The blood test correctly identified the origin of the cancer in nine out of 10 cases.

These impressive results suggest the blood test could eventually have a major role to play in diagnosing cancer earlier.

Scientists not involved in the research say more evidence is needed to show whether the blood test reduces deaths from cancer.

The topline results are to be released at the [European Society for Medical Oncology](#) congress in Berlin, but the full details have yet to be published in a peer reviewed journal.

Much will depend on the results of a three-year trial involving 140,000 NHS patients in England, which will be published next year.

The NHS has previously said that if the results are successful, it would extend the tests to a further one million people.

The lead researcher, Dr Nima Nabavizadeh, associate professor of radiation medicine at Oregon Health & Science University said the latest data show that the test could "fundamentally change our approach to cancer screening, helping to detect many types of cancer earlier, when the chance of successful treatment or even cure are the greatest".

But Clare Turnbull, professor of translational cancer genetics at The Institute of Cancer Research, London, said: "Data from randomised studies, with mortality as an endpoint, will be absolutely essential to establish whether seemingly earlier-stage detection by Galleri translates into benefits in mortality."

Sir Harpal Kumar, president of biopharma at Grail, told the BBC: "We think these results are very compelling.

"The opportunity in front of us is that we can find many more cancers - and many of the more aggressive cancers - at a much earlier stage when we have more effective and



potentially curative treatments."

Naser Turabi of Cancer Research UK said: "Further research is needed to avoid overdiagnosing cancers that may not have caused harm.

"The UK National Screening Committee will play a critical role in reviewing the evidence and determining whether these tests should be adopted by the NHS."

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