Molecular Biomarkers Improve Treatment Of Colorectal Cancers

University of Southern California USC

Surgery has always been the most accepted treatment for early-stage colorectal cancers, but a groundbreaking discovery from the Keck School of Medicine at the University of Southern California will likely provide physicians with more treatment options.

In 1998 associate professor of medicine Heinz-Joseph Lenz, M.D., and colleagues David Park, Ph.D., Jan Stoehlmacher, Ph.D., Sheeja Thankappan-Pullarkat, M.D. and Yi Ping Xiong, M.D. discovered a group of biomarkers that are associated with colorectal cancer.

> *Detecting biomarkers specific to a disease can aid in the identification, diagnosis, and treatment of affected individuals, as well as people who may be at risk but do not yet exhibit symptoms.*

Officially called "Medical Diagnostic Predictors of Therapy Response Rate," this technology will help scientists predict therapy response rates and overall outcomes and survival for patients with colorectal cancer, helping caregivers

immediately determine the best methods for treatment.

In 2007 the technology was licensed to Abraxis Bioscience, a biotechnology company located in Los Angeles. The goal of continued research is to combine prognostic markers with specific therapeutic agents, which will allow clinicians to tailor therapy to the molecular profile of the patient while minimizing life-threatening toxicities.

The end result has the potential to improve the overall outcome and survival rate for patients with colorectal cancer.

This story was originally published in 2008.

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