

## Gene Test May Predict the Risk of Return of Colon Cancer

Researchers have developed and verified the first test that can predict the risk of recurrence (return of the cancer after treatment) for patients with stage II colon cancer. The test, called the Oncotype DX colon assay, evaluates several genes to learn whether a patient could be helped with chemotherapy after surgery. Another version of the Oncotype DX test is used to predict the risk of recurrence for women with breast cancer.

### What this means for patients

About 25% to 30% of people with colon cancer have stage II disease. For these patients, chemotherapy may improve their survival, but it is difficult for doctors to know which patients may need chemotherapy and which could be spared from the side effects of treatment. A person with a greater risk of the cancer returning is more likely to benefit from chemotherapy.

“Having this test to predict risk of colon cancer recurrence will have a great impact on the way we treat patients with this disease,” said David Kerr, MD, DSc, Professor of Cancer Medicine at the University of Oxford in the United Kingdom. “It gives doctors important information that will help them to choose the right treatment for patients at the right time.”

Researchers believe that this test may be available by 2010. Talk with your doctor about the stage of your cancer, the treatment available, and any tests you may need to help determine the best treatment for you.

### What to Ask Your Doctor

- What stage of colon cancer do I have?
- What treatment options are available?
- Do you recommend chemotherapy?
- What is the risk that the cancer will come back after treatment?

### For More Information

[Listen \[1\]](#) to Dr. David Kerr discuss this study during the May 14, 2009 presscast

[Cancer.Net Guide to Colorectal Cancer \[2\]](#)

[What to Know: ASCO's Guideline on Adjuvant Chemotherapy for Stage II Colon Cancer \[3\]](#)

#### Links:

[1] [http://www.asco.org/ASCOv2/Department%20Content/Communications/Downloads/May14Presscast%20Dr\\_Kerr.mp3](http://www.asco.org/ASCOv2/Department%20Content/Communications/Downloads/May14Presscast%20Dr_Kerr.mp3)

[2] <http://www.cancer.net/patient/Cancer+Types/Colorectal+Cancer>

[3] <http://www.cancer.net/patient/Publications+and+Resources/What+to+Know%3A+ASCO%27s+Guidelines/What+to+Know%3A+ASCO%27s+Guideline+on+Adjuvant+Chemotherapy+for+Stage+II+Colon+Cancer>