



New method for measuring circulating tumor cells in blood

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As the first in Scandinavia, Humlegaarden now offers testing of circulating tumor cells in the blood. CellSearch[®] is the first diagnostic test with automated collection and identification of the CTCs, tumor cells which are separated from solid tumors and circulating in the patient's blood.

The test identifies and counts the number of circulating tumor cells, down to 1 cell, and from an ordinary 7.5 ml blood sample. The cut-off limit is 5, so if the patient has less than 5 CTCs the prognosis is far better than if the number is above 5. By a cell count over 5, the goal of proper treatment is to lower the count to below 5, which substantially improves the prognosis. Is the number under 5, the doctors will probably choose a milder and less toxic treatment, and can thus save the patient from severe side effects.

With the CTC test it is possible, after as early as 3 weeks, to see if a given treatment works. If not, it can be stopped immediately and replaced by another type of treatment. This saves valuable time by avoiding unnecessary treatment often associated with many side effects, and the CTC test is capable, much better than previously, of predicting a specific prognosis.

Numerous scientific articles have been published on the subject, and clinical trials have been carried out, especially in breast cancer, prostate cancer and colon cancer. On 25 November 2010, Humlegaarden's chief physician participated at a conference in Lund, Sweden organized by Southern Sweden's Oncologists Associations regarding circulating tumor cells. The conclusion here was that the method for detecting circulating tumor cells is a good tool to help oncologists to predict a patient's chances of survival and / or monitor a patient's response to treatment.

In the United States, the CellSearch CTC test is approved for use for metastatic breast cancer, colon cancer and prostate cancer, and several other cancer types are currently being approved.

It is the American company Veridex LLC, which is behind the development of Cell Search.

Contact Humlegaarden for details.