

Liquid biopsy - factsheet

What is a liquid biopsy?

A **liquid biopsy** is an **innovative and minimally invasive test**. A blood sample is analyzed in the laboratory to verify the presence or absence of specific traces derived from a patient's tumour.

Through liquid biopsy, scientists can **detect cancer DNA** that is circulating in the blood, called ctDNA ("circulating tumour DNA"). ctDNA is the DNA released by the tumour cells into the blood, therefore, it is an indicator of **cancer cells remaining in the body** (minimal residual disease, or MRD) and it carries the same characteristics as the tumour of origin.

After a surgery with curative intent, if a liquid biopsy test is positive, it means that there might be other cancer cells somewhere in the body, even though the primary tumour has been removed. The clinicians involved in SAGITTARIUS will **analyse the genetic profile** of each patient's primary tumour and use it to create a personalised liquid biopsy test. This test will then be able to detect tumour DNA in their blood, and to help doctors understand which post-surgery, personalised treatment strategies could be used.

Liquid biopsy is still under research and it is not yet considered a diagnostic test. Therefore, it is recommended that a patient undergoes the test within a clinical trial.

Diverse clinical trials all over the world are investigating the clinical utility of liquid biopsy. SAGITTARIUS is the first phase III randomised clinical study in Europe testing an individualized, tumor-informed liquid biopsy approach to optimize post-surgery treatment in locoregional colon cancer.

Patients with a high-risk stage II or a stage III colon cancer that would like to be considered for inclusion in the SAGITTARIUS trial can contact the closest clinical centre involved in the clinical study.

Clinical study coordinator centres



SAGITTARIUS consortium



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