

Dr. Dash developing possible blood test for early detection of Liver Cancer

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Dr. Srikanta Dash has used the NanoSight NS300 to identify and quantify biomarkers in the blood samples of liver cancer patients, in the hopes of developing strategies for earlier detection.

Srikanta Dash, PhD, professor of pathology and laboratory medicine, is working to make earlier detection of liver cancer possible. Hepatocellular carcinoma (HCC) is the sixth most common cancer worldwide and often goes undiagnosed until late stages, when treatment options are limited. Dash and his team are exploring extracellular vesicles (EVs) — tiny particles released from liver tumor cells — as potential blood-based biomarkers that could signal cancer much earlier.

Using the NanoSight NS300, the researchers have been able to fluorescently illuminate and quantify HCC-derived EVs in blood samples. Their results show a clear connection between EV concentration and tumor size, pointing to a promising new way to detect cancer and monitor treatment response. Dash hopes this work will lead to simple blood tests that help physicians diagnose liver disease sooner, improving outcomes for patients in Louisiana and beyond.

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