Thank You . . .

In this Research Update, we are pleased to share new findings from our Pancreatic Cancer Research Team. We also are opening new studies for which you may be eligible. Our overall goal is to help pancreatic cancer patients and their families by better understanding risks and using the information from our research for prevention and early detection strategies. We are grateful for your interest and participation in Mayo Clinic’s research.

Gloria M. Petersen, Ph.D.
Principal Investigator

New Biomarker Research May Improve Early Detection of Pancreatic Cancer for Patients at High Risk

Most pancreatic cancer patients are diagnosed at a stage that is too late to successfully have tumors surgically removed. The need for early detection methods is a high priority to be able to treat pancreatic cancer patients when the cancer could be cured and increase survival. Our study tested the ability of two biomarkers (a substance in our blood that can detect the presence of certain diseases), called THBS2 and CA19-9 to detect pancreatic cancer. When combined these two biomarkers correctly identified a patient with pancreatic cancer 87% of the time and could correctly tell if a person did not have pancreatic cancer 98% of the time. The future hopes of these findings is that the combination of these two biomarkers could potentially serve as a low-cost screening tool to offer individuals at a higher risk of developing pancreatic cancer. Additional biomarkers are currently under investigation. When this study was published in the scientific journal, there were press releases, including this one that appeared on the CBS News website: https://www.cbsnews.com/news/pancreatic-cancer-blood-test-earlier-detection/

Reference:

Mayo Clinic awarded a Pancreatic Cancer Action Network Early Detection Targeted Grant

A group of research teams across the country has been funded to advance early detection with blood tests. Mayo Clinic, along with M.D. Anderson Cancer Center, Oregon Health Sciences University, and University of Pennsylvania are working collaboratively to share ideas, technology, and valuable samples that will help identify patients before they are symptomatic for pancreatic cancer. https://www.pancan.org/research/grants-program/grants-awarded/by-type/early-detection-targeted-grant/
**New Research Opportunity**

*Recent Elevated Glucose and Recent Diabetes (REGARD) Cohort Study*

The REGARD Cohort study, led by Mayo Clinic Rochester gastroenterologist Dr. Suresh Chari, aims to find the best way to screen for pancreatic cancer in people between the ages of 50 and 85 who have a new diagnosis of type 2 diabetes.

People who are interested in taking part in the REGARD study must meet all of the following criteria:

- ✔ Age between 50 and 85 years
- ✔ Resident of Wisconsin
- ✔ One of the following:
  - Fasting blood glucose > 126 or
  - Random blood glucose > 200 or
  - Hemoglobin A1c > 6.5
- ✔ Not currently taking steroids at the time of the blood draws
- ✔ No personal history of pancreatic cancer

Study participants will be followed for up to three years and will be asked to:

- Provide a blood sample and complete a questionnaire at the time of study enrollment.
- Provide blood samples and complete questionnaires at 6, 12, and 24 months after enrollment.

Upon completion of each blood draw and questionnaire, the participant will be given $25, up to a total of $100. There is no cost to the participant to be in the study.

Enrollment for the study is now open.

Corinna Sabaque, Cynthia Beinhorn, Maria Stevens, Cassandra Bell
REGARD Study Team

For more information about the REGARD study at Mayo Clinic, please contact:
REGARD Study Coordinator
1-833-527-2442
REGARDSTUDY@mayo.edu

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**A Genetic Disclosure "Experiment"**

In research projects, the blood samples donated by participants often can be stored until enough samples have accumulated to perform an analysis or when technology is available. In some cases, the research reveals information that could be useful to the family, even when the research participant has passed away.

We recently completed a major study, funded by the National Institutes of Health, which sought to understand the ethical, legal, and family concerns of notifying family members if genetic results are uncovered in this situation. We interviewed current research participants with pancreatic cancer and their family members of both living and deceased pancreatic cancer patients. The study revealed that there is a high level of interest by research participants and family members to share genomic research results.

We put together an expert panel and developed recommendations, including: “If there is any potential for return of such results to relatives, the researchers should ask participants their preferences for sharing results with relatives, including after the participant’s death, and should invite participants to identify their preferred representative to make decisions about relatives’ access to their genomic results” when the participant is unable to do so or is deceased.

We then developed an “experiment” in which we disclosed the information to several families in which a cancer gene mutation was found in a research blood sample of a pancreatic cancer research participant who was now deceased. We aligned the experiment with Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) regulations and designed the disclosure to occur through the personal representative or next of kin. Our research data are currently being analyzed.
Representing Advocacy for Pancreas Patients with Outreach and Research Teams (RAPPORT)

RAPPORT is a patient advocate group based in Minnesota that was established in October 2008 as an affiliate of the Pancreatic Cancer SPORE at Mayo Clinic. RAPPORT includes pancreatic cancer survivors, caregivers, and other participants. Their mission is to determine the critical issues facing those affected by pancreatic cancer and to serve as a resource to both the pancreatic cancer research community and conduct outreach efforts.

RAPPORT members provide a patient and caregiver perspective on current pancreatic cancer research efforts with the goal of helping to find a cure. RAPPORT members also work to assist patients and caregivers as they fight this disease.

If you are interested in helping in our battle against pancreatic cancer, please contact Bridget Rathbun at 1-800-914-7962 (option 1) or pancreas@mayo.edu.

RAPPORT Member Advocacy Story: Scott Nelson

Pancreatic cancer advocacy is a way of giving back to others for the incredible, inspirational, amazing support I got from family, friends, coworkers, and the medical community. That support made all the difference for me, and it saved my life.

Bringing the patient perspective to research projects and clinical trials is important in a number of ways; advocates can act as a link between the community and the researchers. We can bring the patient voice to research decisions, some of which include patient communications, quality of life impacts, and clinical trial enrollment.

I’m excited to recently be named a patient advocate on the new Stand Up to Cancer (SU2C) Interception Dream Team. Mayo Clinic is partnering with other top pancreatic cancer researchers from M.D. Anderson, Johns Hopkins, Dana-Farber, UC San Diego, and MIT to find ways to “intercept” pancreatic cancer at a very early stage. Finding pancreatic cancer early is critical. I’m looking forward to the positive impact this important research will have on patient survival, as well as my family, friends and coworkers.

– Scott Nelson

Certain Types of Diet that Promote Inflammation Can Increase Risk of Pancreatic Cancer

Studies suggest that diet may have an impact on a person’s risk of pancreatic cancer. Other studies have also shown that there is a strong relationship between pancreatic cancer and certain dietary intake, cigarette smoking, and diabetes, which are known to cause inflammation in cells or tissues. These findings imply that inflammation may play a key role in pancreatic cancer. For example, pro-inflammation dietary factors are saturated fat, trans fat, cholesterol, or sugar-sweetened beverages. Anti-inflammation items can include plant foods, whole grains, or folate. We compared 817 people with pancreatic cancer to 1,756 healthy controls. Our findings suggest that having a combination of a diet with high inflammatory potential, cigarette smoking, and diabetes has a stronger risk of pancreatic cancer compared to having any of these conditions alone.


Past Newsletters...

For more information about pancreatic cancer research, please refer to our previous newsletters, they can be requested by contacting the Pancreas Research Team or viewed online at: http://mayoresearch.mayo.edu/mayo/research/petersen_lab
Message from the Study Coordinators

We have enjoyed working with you and your families on this important cancer research. Thank you for your time and dedication during the course of the study and for providing us with important information and blood or tissue samples. Without your help, our research would not be possible. If you learn of any relevant updates to your personal or family medical history (new diagnoses of cancers, pancreatic conditions, or genetic testing results), we would be grateful if you notified us by mail, by phone (1-800-914-7962), or by email (pancreas@mayo.edu).

Frequently Asked Question

Will I find out my results from the research?
When we study the samples and medical information you provided for our pancreas disease research registry, it often takes us many years to find results. You should not typically expect to get your results from taking part in our research. However, there is a small chance that we could discover something that might provide insight on potential health issues specific to you. If this happens, we will contact you to see if you want to learn more. If you don’t want to find out the results, you can say no. Because this is research, we would not give your results to your doctor or put them in your medical record.

New Cures, New Hope - Support Pancreatic Cancer Research at Mayo Clinic

Mayo Clinic has been known as a top-notch destination for hope and healing, and for its commitment to innovative biomedical research. As a not-for-profit organization, we rely on support from donations and grants to find the latest answers. Make your tax-deductible gift for pancreatic cancer research today by phone: call 855-852-8129 (toll-free); or email: development@mayo.edu. We are grateful for your interest in advancing our work.

Who’s Doing Pancreatic Cancer Research?

ClinicalTrials.gov
http://www.clinicaltrials.gov/
This website is a detailed and current registry of federally and privately supported clinical trials for many different diseases and conditions in the U.S. and around the world.

Clinical Trials at Mayo Clinic
http://clinicaltrials.mayo.edu/
This website provides information about research studies for many different diseases and conditions at Mayo Clinic.

How to Contact Us

Address: Pancreas Research Project
200 First St SW
Mayo Clinic
Rochester, MN 55905
Phone: 1-800-914-7962
E-mail: pancreas@mayo.edu
Website: http://mayoresearch.mayo.edu/mayo/research/petersen_lab
Study Coordinators:
Sarah Amundson, Cynthia Beinhorn, Cassandra Bell, Jennifer Brooks, Christen Muenkel, Bridget Rathbun

Resources

Pancreatic Cancer Action Network, Inc. (PanCAN)
http://www.pancan.org
National advocacy and patient support organization for pancreatic cancer.

The Lustgarten Foundation for Pancreatic Cancer Research
http://www.lustgarten.org
Non-profit organization for supporting pancreatic cancer research and education.

The Rolfe Pancreatic Cancer Foundation
http://www.rolfefoundation.org
The foundation raises charitable dollars to provide grants to top-tier medical institutions for research in early detection of pancreatic cancer.