

## SELF-HELP GROUPS

**Al-Anon (Astoria)** — 7 p.m. Tuesday, Peace Lutheran Church, 565 12th St.; 12 p.m. Wednesday, First United Methodist Church, 1076 Franklin Ave. For information, call 503-325-1087; 7 p.m. Thursday, Crossroads Community Church, 40618 Old Highway 30, Svensen. For information, call 503-458-6467.

**Al-Anon (Clatskanie)** — 8 p.m. Monday, Faith Lutheran Church, 1010 N.E. Fifth St., Clatskanie. For information, call 503-728-3351.

**Al-Anon (Nehalem)** — 7 p.m. Monday, Riverbend Room, North County Recreation District, 36155 Ninth St. For information, call 503-368-8255.

**Al-Anon (Seaside)** — 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, Seaside Public Library, 1131 Broadway, call 503-810-5196 for information.

**Al-Anon (Tillamook)** — 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, St. Albans Episcopal Church, 2102 Sixth St., call 503-842-5094 for information; noon Friday, 5012 Third St., call 503-730-5863 for information.

**Al-Anon Family Groups** information, Oregon Area Al-Anon website. oregonal-anon.org

**Alateen (Tillamook)** — 6:30 p.m. Thursday, 5012 Third St. For information, call 503-730-5863.

**Alcoholics Anonymous** — To find a meeting in Clatsop County, call 971-601-9220, in Tillamook County, call 503-739-4856, or go to aa-oregon.org

**Celebrate Recovery** — 6 p.m. Thursday, The Table Church, 852 Broadway, Seaside. Faith-based 12-step program designed to help anyone struggling with hurts, habits and hangups, including drugs and alcohol, anger, co-dependence, domestic abuse or sex, food or pornography addictions. Being religious not required. Free dinner and child care provided. For information, call D.B. Lewis at 503-741-5977.

**Eating Disorders Anonymous** — 1:10 to 2:10 p.m. Wednesdays, River Zen Yoga, 399 31st St. A 12-Step program. For information, call Susan Williams at 510-417-5553.

**Kick Butts Group Meets (Nicotine Anonymous)** — 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, Seaside Public Library, 1131 Broadway.

**Men's Sexual Purity Recovery Group** — Tuesday nights. Part of the Pure Life Alliance (purelifealliance.org) in Portland. For information, call the confidential voice mail at 503-750-0817 and leave a message.

**Narcotics Anonymous** — The Northwest Oregon Area of Narcotics Anonymous (NWOANA) holds meetings in Clatsop County. For full schedule details, as well as upcoming special events, call the Helpline at 503-717-3702, or go to nworegonna.org

**Oveateers Anonymous Women's Meeting** — noon to 1 p.m. Thursday, 1218 Avenue A., Seaside.

**TOPS (Take Off Pounds Sensibly) (Astoria)** — 5 p.m. weigh-in, 5:30 p.m. meeting Tuesday, First Lutheran Church, 725 33rd St. For information, call Trisha Hayrynen at 503-298-9058.

**TOPS (Seaside)** — 9:15 to 10:15 a.m. meeting Tuesday, North Coast Family Fellowship Church, 2245 N. Wahanna Road. All are welcome. For information, call 509-910-0354.

**TOPS (Warrenton)** — 9 to 9:45 a.m. weigh-in, 10 a.m. meeting Wednesday, First Baptist Church, 30 N.E. First St. For information, call Marilyn Barnard 503-861-2918 or Jeannie Pike 503-861-1404.

# Blood test to detect cancers early gives promising results

By **MARILYNN MARCHIONE**  
Associated Press

Scientists are reporting progress on a blood test to detect many types of cancer at an early stage, including some of the most deadly ones that lack screening tools now.

Many groups are working on liquid biopsy tests, which look for DNA and other things that tumors shed into blood, to try to find cancer before it spreads, when chances of cure are best.

In a study Thursday in the journal *Science*, Johns Hopkins University scientists looked to see how well their experimental test detected cancer in people already known to have the disease. The blood tests found about 70 percent of eight common types of cancer in the 1,005 patients. The rates varied depending on the type — lower for breast tumors but high for ovarian, liver and pancreatic ones.

In many cases, the test narrowed the possible origin of the cancer to one or two places, such as colon or lung, important for limiting how much follow-up testing a patient might need. It gave only seven false alarms when tried on 812 others without cancer.

The test is nowhere near ready for use yet; it needs to be validated in a larger study already underway in a general population, rather than cancer patients, to see if it truly works and helps save lives — the best measure of a screening test's value.

**'We have a long way to go to demonstrate its effectiveness as a screening test.'**

**Dr. Len Lichtenfeld**  
deputy chief medical officer of the American Cancer Society

"We're very, very excited and see this as a first step," said Nickolas Papadopoulos, one of the Hopkins study leaders. "But we don't want people calling up" and asking for the test now, because it's not available, he said.

Some independent experts saw great promise.

"It's such a good first set of results" that it gives hope this approach will pan out, said Dr. Peter Bach, a health policy expert at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center who consults for a gene testing company. "Anything close to 50 percent or 40 percent detection is pretty exciting stuff," and this one did better than that, he said.

Dr. Len Lichtenfeld, deputy chief medical officer of the American Cancer Society, was encouraged that the test did well on cancers that lack screening tests now. If a blood test could find 98 percent of ovarian cancers at an early stage, as these early results suggest, "that would be a significant advance," he said.

But he cautioned: "We have a long way to go to demonstrate its effectiveness as a screening test."

The test detects mutations in 16 genes tied to cancer and

measures eight proteins that often are elevated when cancer is present.

It covers breast, colon and lung and five kinds that don't have screening tests for people at average risk: ovarian, liver, stomach, pancreatic and esophageal. Prostate cancer is not included. A blood test already is widely used — the PSA test — but its value for screening is controversial.

Researchers tried the new test on people whose cancers were still confined to where it started or had spread a little but not widely throughout the body. It detected 33 percent of breast cancers, about 60 percent of colon or lung cancers and nearly all of the ovarian and liver ones. It did better when tumors were larger or had spread. It did less well at the very earliest stage.

The test probably will not work as well when tested in a general population rather than those already known to have cancer, researchers say. Hopkins and Geisinger Health System in Pennsylvania have started a study of it in 10,000 Geisinger patients who will be tracked for at least five years.

The work was financed by many foundations, the Mayo Clinic, the National Institutes

of Health and Howard Hughes Medical Institute, which provides The Associated Press with funding for health and science coverage. Many study leaders have financial ties to gene testing companies, and some get royalties for patents on cancer detection methods.

Researchers say the test could cost around \$500 based on current materials and methods, but the ultimate goal is to commercialize it, so what a company would charge is unknown.

Also this week, Taiwan-based CellMax Life gave results on its liquid biopsy test, which looks for whole tumor cells shed into blood, at an American Society of Clinical Oncology conference.

Researchers tested 620 people getting colonoscopies or with confirmed colon cancer at a hospital in Taiwan. The company said its test had an overall accuracy of 84 to 88 percent for detecting cancer or precancerous growths and a false alarm rate around 3 percent.

The company's chief executive, Atul Sharan, said U.S. studies should start this year. The test is sold now in Taiwan for \$500, but should cost around \$150 in the U.S., he said.

Dr. Richard Schilsky, chief medical officer of the oncology society, said results are encouraging, but the test needs more study, especially to see if it gives too many false alarms.

"The last thing you'd want is a test that tells you you might have cancer if you don't," he said.

## MORE VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

**Clatsop Community Action Regional Food Bank** — Volunteers needed to help hand out fruits and vegetables at the weekly

produce pantries for two hours on Thursdays, from April to October, in Seaside and Warrenton. Warehouse attendants are needed for food packing or processing, picking orders for agencies, light janitorial and housekeeping, or lawn and grounds maintenance. Three to four-hour shifts are available Monday through Friday. To volunteer, call 503-861-3663.

**Clatsop Community College Outreach Literacy** — Needs volunteer literacy tutors to work with adults, native and non-native speakers. Training available. For information, call 503-338-2557.

**Clatsop County Public Works** — 1101 Olney Ave. Adopt-A-Road volunteers needed to remove litter two times (minimum) per year for two years. Safety equipment and supplies provided. Volunteers must receive safety orientation. For information, call 503-325-8631.

**Clatsop Cruise Hosts** — Looking for volunteers to meet and greet cruise ship passengers and crew, provide information and answer questions about the Clatsop County area. Ships arrive in the spring and fall, about 20 ships each year. Work all the ships or part of them. For information, go to clatsopcruisehosts.org

**Coast Community Radio** — Volunteers needed for a variety of opportunities and time commitments including weekday front desk, music library digital conversion, graphic and sign making, booths at farmers markets and special events, landscaping, and mailing parties. For information, email janet@coastradio.org or call 503-325-0010.

**Columbia Memorial Hospital** — Needs volunteers to provide

assistance to patients, visitors and hospital staff. Training provided. For information, go to columbiamemorial.org. To schedule an interview, call 503-325-4321.

**Columbia River Maritime Museum** — 1792 Marine Drive. Volunteer opportunities for those with an interest in maritime history. For information, call the volunteer coordinator weekdays at 503-325-2323.

**Columbia Senior Diners** — 1111 Exchange St., Astoria Senior Center. Volunteers needed weekdays to serve tables and for kitchen help. To volunteer, call 503-325-9693.

**Community Emergency Response Team** — CERT volunteers needed for community events and disaster response with local police, fire and emergency medical service agencies. Training includes fire safety, first aid, traffic and crowd control, communications, damage survey, disaster planning and civic events within city limits. For information, contact CERT coordinator Kenny Hansen at khansen@astoria.or.us or leave a voicemail at 503-325-4411.

**Friends of Seaside Library** — 1131 Broadway, Seaside. Volunteers needed to staff the fundraising store. For information, call 503-738-6742 or stop by the library.

**Haystack Rock Awareness Program** — Needs volunteers for general office assistance and to assist lead interpreters on the beach with signage, ropes and set up during low tides and talking to visitors about the rock and the local flora and fauna. Must pass a basic background test. Children are always welcome; must be supervised by a parent. For in-

formation, contact Lisa Habecker at 503-436-8064 or habecker@ci.cannon-beach.or.us

**Knappa Rural Fire Protection District** — Needs volunteer firefighters. Training provided. For information, contact any of the active personnel or call Chief Paul Olheiser at 503-458-6610.

**Long-Term Care Ombudsman** — Certified ombudsman volunteers advocate for the rights, care and dignity of the elderly and disabled living in licensed long-term care facilities. Many residents have no one to watch out or speak up for when things go wrong. Volunteer Ombudsmen talk to the residents, investigate complaints, and work to resolve problems. Flexible schedule, four hours a week, mileage reimbursement available. Training is provided. For information, call 800-522-2602 or go to oregon.gov/lrco

**Lunch Buddy Mentoring Program** — Adults needed to mentor elementary and middle school students once a week during lunch. For information, call Mary Jackson at 503-440-0368 or email lunchbuddies.mp@gmail.com

**NorthWest Senior & Disability Services** — Needs dishwashers and volunteers to serve and clean up weekdays at a meal site, and drivers for Meals on Wheels. For information, contact Candy Foster at 503-738-9323.

**Providence Seaside Hospital** — Needs volunteer drivers for Community Connections, a free program that transports people to services and appointments related to health and well-being in the Portland-Metro area. Mileage reimbursement available. For information, call 503-717-7171 or email Alana.Kujala@providence.org

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