Breath Tests May Allow for Earlier Detection of Pancreatic Cancer

Pancreatic cancer carries a very poor prognosis as most patients are diagnosed at an advanced stage. Now a new *BJS* (*British Journal of Surgery*) study indicates that breath analyses may help detect pancreatic cancer earlier, when curative treatments may be possible.

For the study, investigators examined volatile organic compounds in breath samples from patients with localized and metastatic pancreatic cancers, compared with patients with benign pancreatic disease and some with a normal pancreas. Tests identified 12 compounds that were indicative of pancreatic cancer. These compounds were from three main chemical groups, namely aldehydes, alkanes and alcohols.

“The final application of breath testing in the patient care pathway will depend on test sensitivity and specificity in large multicentre clinical trials, and its performance in early pancreatic cancer and high-risk groups,” the authors wrote.

**Additional Information**


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