

Colorectal Cancer Screening

New test for early detection of colorectal cancer

Tumor M2-PK in stool helps to identify colorectal cancer events even at an early stage

Gießen – Colorectal cancer – very often it's discovered too late. With 50,000 new cases and 30,000 deaths per year it's the second biggest cause of death from cancer in Germany. Yet with a timely diagnosis, the chances of a cure are near to 100 %. Usually it affects men and women between the ages of 50 and 70. That's why every effort is directed at discovering the cancer at the earliest possible stage. Such a test for the early diagnosis of colorectal cancer has recently been developed by ScheBo® • Biotech AG of Giessen. Until now only non-specific tests for blood in the stool could give a hint of events related to colorectal cancer in about 30 % of cases.

With the new method it's now possible, in 85 % of cases, "to identify colorectal cancer events that already occur at an early stage", according to board member Dr. Ursula Scheefers-Borchel. Thereby ScheBo Biotech AG in Giessen hopes to be able to significantly improve colorectal cancer patients' chances of being cured. The new procedure has a far higher sensitivity and specificity than the tests for blood in the stool which have been used until now. The crucial element is a patented procedure for determining **Tumor M2-PK** in stool samples. **Tumor M2-PK** is a decisive key enzyme for the regulation of tumor metabolism in the human body. Even at an early stage it is possible to track down and treat the "aggressor" with this new method. Even pre-cancerous stages of colorectal cancer - so called adenomas - can already be recognised after they have reached a certain size. The test is not a burden for the patient and can be run in any laboratory without much investment. A pea-sized stool sample is sufficient.

As colorectal cancer are amongst the most common tumours in the industrialised countries of the Western world, the new method is particularly suitable for screening once per year from the age of 35 and for at-risk patients according to Dr. Scheefers-Borchel. Testing for **Tumor M2-PK**, she predicts, will play a leading role in the early detection of colorectal cancer, due to its accuracy. The test will become available as a laboratory test at the beginning of March 2003.

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