

Genetic Testing May Help Predict Patient Response To Chemotherapy.

Bloomberg News (5/11, Tirrell) reports, "Breast cancer survival can be predicted with a genetic test that indicates which patients will benefit from chemotherapy," according to a study in the Journal of the American Medical Association. Of the patients "predicted to be helped by chemotherapy, the study found a 92 percent survival rate without relapse after three years." Last year, more than "207,000 women in the US were diagnosed with breast cancer, and almost 40,000 died from the disease," according to the National Cancer Institute.

The CNN (5/10, Henry) "The Chart" blog reported that researchers "looked at 310 patients with stage two or stage three breast cancer with large tumors that may already have spread to the lymph nodes." They determined the patients' "sensitivity to endocrine therapy, chemoresistance and chemosensitivity and compared it with other genetic predictors of chemotherapy response." From this data, the study authors "say they were able to identify patients with high probability of survival following taxane and anthracycline chemotherapy."

HealthDay (5/10, Gardner) noted that according to the study's lead author, "gene-based tests such as the Oncotype DX are already in wide use to help guide breast cancer care."