

Prostate blood test will spare men painful biopsies

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90 per cent, when combined with PSA results. Scientists from Queen Mary University of London said it could help men avoid unnecessary and invasive biopsies, over-diagnosis and over-treatment.

The test, called Parsortix - detects early cancer cells, or circulating tumour cells (CTCs), that have left the tumour and entered the bloodstream.

This appears to be more accurate than measuring PSA proteins, which can be present in the blood for reasons other than cancer.

The study, published in the *Journal of Urology*, looked at the use of the CTC test in 98 pre-biopsy patients and 155 newly diagnosed prostate cancer patients at St Bartholomew's Hospital in London.

Researchers found that the presence of CTCs in pre-biopsy blood samples correctly determined which patients had cancer. The number and type of CTCs also helped indicate how aggressive the cancer was.

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