

Division of Cancer Prevention

**The Early Detection Research Network
(EDRN)**

Scientific Advances (2015-2020)

Contents

3	Executive Summary Introduction Overview and History Impact on Cancer Early Detection
5	Organizational Structure
6	EDRN Process for Biomarker Discovery, Development and Validation Business Model Biomarkers Pipeline - From Discovery to Development to Validation: Process, Prioritization, and Performance
11	Collaborative Approach and Environment Innovative Funding Mechanisms: Set-Aside and Core Funds EDRN Biospecimen Reference Set
18	Scientific Accomplishments
18	Continuous Improvements
19	FDA-Approved Biomarker Tests and Devices available in CLIA Laboratories
24	Ongoing Validation Studies
27	Novel Approaches, Technologies and Resources
30	Research Advances and Collaborative Projects
30	Colorectal and Other Gastrointestinal Cancers Collaborative Group
39	Prostate and Other Urological Cancers Collaborative Group
45	Lung and Upper Aerodigestive Cancers Collaborative Group
52	Breast and Gynecologic Cancers Collaborative Group
61	Building Scientific Resources
68	Summary
70	List of EDRN Publications

Executive Summary

Introduction

Although significant roadblocks have hindered the field of biomarker discovery, the Early Detection Research Network (EDRN) has helped overcome many of them by setting well-defined strategies and milestones focused on solving defined unmet clinical needs. The EDRN has implemented benchmarks to improve biomarker discovery and validation, such as data sharing, use of common data elements, generating multi-disciplinary and multi-institutional collaborations within a cohesive and productive team environment, and putting emphasis on quality control and data replication for all candidate biomarkers for reaching a “go” or “no go” decision. The EDRN attracts excellent academic and industrial scientists by providing access to diverse top-quality assays, clinical specimens, methodological expertise, industrial resources, and financial resources that are not available through other government or industry-based funding mechanisms.

The way the EDRN is organized provides flexibility to respond in a timely fashion to new opportunities and there are few barriers that prevent the EDRN from responding to changes in research priorities. The EDRN has made a major contribution to the research community by providing criteria and standards for validating biomarkers via published validation study protocols designed by EDRN investigators. The Network continues to address a multiplicity of needs in discovery, validation, tissue collection, informatics, public sector collaboration and engaging academia and the private sector. Fulfilling the expectations for rapid discovery and validation of cancer biomarkers requires a continued and sustained investment in biomarker research. The process of bringing new biomarkers to the clinic faces challenges similar to the process of bringing new pharmaceuticals to the clinic, but with the current infrastructure in place, these expectations can be realized in the near future.

Overview and History

In 2000, the National Cancer Institute (NCI) established the EDRN, an investigator-driven network to conduct translational research to identify, develop and validate biomarkers for early cancer detection and risk assessment. This consortium of more than 300 investigators at academic institutions and in the private sector are working collaboratively to bring biomarkers to clinical fruition. These scientists represent diverse disciplines, including genomics, proteomics, metabolomics, bioinformatics, imaging, clinical medicine, and public health. EDRN Principal Investigators frequently comment on the value of having both biomarker discoverers and clinicians within the EDRN where they can learn from each other and exchange ideas. Clinicians provide valuable information to biomarker developers on the clinical context in which a biomarker will be used and the required performance characteristics, which helps them design

their discovery projects. Conversely, biomarker developers inform clinicians on the analytical performance of different classes of biomarkers that helps them design the validation studies.

Since its establishment, the EDRN has been renewed three times, which involved evaluations by external reviewers, NCI leadership and the NCI Board of Scientific Advisors. Although the essential mission of the EDRN, the discovery, development and validation of biomarkers to improve early cancer detection, has remained the same, there have been changes in focus with evolving developments in the field. In 2014, the EDRN Network Consulting Team recommended the EDRN increase its support for imaging as it relates to screening and early detection and to support research that integrates imaging and biomarkers. The NCI Board of Scientific Advisors agreed with this recommendation. In the current EDRN cycle, most of the Clinical Validation Centers and many of the Biomarker Developmental Laboratories include imaging as a significant component of their research. Also, during the last renewal, the Board of Scientific Advisors recommended that more emphasis and a larger fraction of the EDRN resources be devoted to biomarker validation. Consequently, there has been an increase in the percentage of EDRN funds being used to support biomarker validation.

In the current cycle, the EDRN has increased its research on pancreatic cancer, which is now the third leading cause of cancer deaths in the U.S. Another area of increased research by EDRN investigators has been to develop and validate biomarkers and imaging methods that can accurately distinguish an indolent cancer from an early stage cancer that is destined to progress and thereby help reduce the extent of overdiagnosis and overtreatment. Overdiagnosis of prostate, lung and breast cancer present significant clinical challenges that have major impact on patients' health.

As detailed in this progress report, this integrated network has made and continues to make substantial progress on improving methods to detect cancer earlier and has adapted to the evolving needs of the field (e.g., preferential detection of clinically significant disease and integrating biomarkers with imaging). Over its history, EDRN investigators have made significant contributions to the development and validation of 8 Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved biomarker tests or devices and 19 biomarker tests that are available in Clinical Laboratory Amendment (CLIA) laboratories.

Impact on Cancer Early Detection

Without the EDRN, research into new biomarkers for early cancer detection and risk would have remained on the periphery of research with strong, yet fragmented laboratory studies, many of which would not have been reproduced and validated. The lack of reproducibility of scientific data remains a major challenge and continues to plague scientific data. Indeed, each year thousands of research articles are published on cancer biomarkers, however, much of this literature includes studies that were conducted without appropriate study designs, and only a handful of biomarkers have been approved by the FDA. It is, therefore, important to continue to

have an infrastructure such as the EDRN that systematically assesses biomarkers and selects the most promising ones for transition through rigorous validation for clearly defined clinical uses. Within the EDRN, discovery leads to additional work that confirms and improves the accuracy of the biomarker, which then moves to early clinical validation. Through this approach to translational research, the EDRN has built and implemented a vertically integrated pipeline of biomarkers for cancer early detection and risk assessment.

The EDRN has a mechanism in place that serves as both a “brake” and an “accelerator.” Within the EDRN, biomarkers undergo rigorous tests before they are adopted for larger validation studies. Biomarkers that are not effective for the intended clinical objective are not considered further. Each biomarker is tested against the following benchmarks:

1. Is the biomarker assay reproducible in an independent laboratory?
2. Is the biomarker’s performance reproducible when checked using independent clinical reference samples?
3. Does the biomarker outperform currently used marker, or add significant value to it?

If the answer to any of these questions is “no”, then it is a ‘no go’ for moving forward.

The EDRN’s structure provides a solid approach to translational research. In his 2007 presentation to Congress, NIH Director Elias Zerhouni cited the EDRN as one of the major NIH programs with significant outcomes for the investment. EDRN’s approach fits with the NIH’s research paradigm for the future, which seeks to transform medicine from curative and reactionary to preemptive and anticipatory. As Dr. Zerhouni testified, “A more predictive, personalized and preemptive form of medicine is no longer just a dream but a vision to strive for, because it can reduce disease burden and its costs while improving individual quality of life.” Other NIH institutes have emulated the EDRN model for their translational and clinical programs, e.g. Quantitative Imaging Network, Human Tumor Atlas Network, and Informatics Technology for Cancer Research.

Organizational Structure

The four components of the EDRN have distinct but complementary roles and work synergistically to facilitate the discovery, development, and validation of cancer biomarkers.

1. ***Biomarker Developmental Laboratories (BDLs)***: BDLs discover, develop, and characterize new biomarkers or refine existing biomarkers. Within the EDRN, BDLs are the primary source of new biomarkers or panels of biomarkers on which the EDRN conducts validation studies. They also develop assays to detect candidate biomarkers and conduct pre-validation studies.
2. ***Biomarker Reference Laboratories (BRLs)***: The primary role of the BRLs is to conduct assays for EDRN validation studies. The assays are performed on blinded biospecimens

to minimize bias in the analysis and independently verify the assay performance. BRLs also serve as the primary resource for analytical validation of biomarkers, technological development, standardization, assay refinement and quality control.

3. ***Clinical Validation Centers (CVCs)***: The primary role of the CVCs is to conduct validation studies on biomarkers discovered/developed by both EDRN and non-EDRN investigators. CVCs also provide high-quality, well-annotated biospecimens to the BDLs for biomarker discovery, development and pre-validation studies. The use of biospecimens collected using rigorous standard operating procedures helps minimize false discoveries.
4. ***Data Management and Coordinating Center (DMCC)***: One of the major roles of the DMCC is to work with the CVCs to conduct biomarker validation studies. The DMCC assists with protocol design, monitors the validation study, and maintains the data and biospecimen tracking system. The DMCC is responsible for analyzing the results of the validation studies, thereby reducing bias as they are independent from the laboratories that discovered the biomarkers. The DMCC provides statistical advice to the BDLs, develops theoretical and applied approaches for simultaneous analysis of multiple markers, and collaborates with the EDRN Informatics Center (described below).

EDRN Steering Committee: The EDRN Steering Committee is composed of all the EDRN Principal Investigators (PIs) and is responsible for overseeing the activities of EDRN and setting priorities. The Steering Committee meets in person twice a year and a subset of PIs, consisting of the EDRN Chair and Co-Chair and the elected Chairs of the Collaborative Groups, have monthly conference calls.

Collaborative Groups: Within the EDRN there are four organ-specific Collaborative Groups — Breast and Gynecologic Cancers (current focus is on breast and ovarian cancers), Colorectal and Other Gastrointestinal Cancers (current focus is on colorectal, esophageal and pancreatic cancers), Lung and Upper Aerodigestive Cancers (current focus is on lung cancer and mesothelioma), and Prostate and Other Urologic Cancers (current focus is on prostate cancer). Every EDRN PI is a member of at least one Collaborative Group, participates in collaborative research projects, and attends monthly conference calls.

Interagency Agreements: The EDRN has collaborations with four other Federal agencies: (1) the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL), which supports EDRN informatics; (2) Pacific Northwest National Laboratory (PNNL), which supports the development of proteomic-based assays; (3) the Department of Defense Center for Prostate Disease Research (CPDR), which assists in the development of specific monoclonal antibodies and provides valuable biospecimens collected from subjects with prostatic diseases with high representation of African Americans (30%); and (4) the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), which assists in the development of standards and reference materials (in this cycle, they developed standards for miRNA and cfDNA). The EDRN also works closely

with the private sector to avoid duplication and accelerate the application of biomarkers for diagnostic uses.

EDRN Process for Biomarker Discovery, Development and Validation

Business Model: Biomarker research has generally followed a horizontal approach, which often results in functional “silos” in which investigators develop expertise where depth of knowledge in one specific area is critical. Such a “horizontal” structure fosters excellent solutions for primary scientific problems. However, it often generates barriers in biomarker development and validation when knowledge must be shared between silos. In contrast, the EDRN is organized in a “vertical” structure. In this structure, formal “hand-off” procedures have been designed to ensure that discoveries in one aspect of biomarker development are rapidly and efficiently conveyed to others who require the information. This allows for rapid vetting of ideas, quickly culling out the poor concepts and fostering the rapid acceptance of good concepts (see EDRN 4th and 5th Reports for details: <https://edrn.nci.nih.gov/docs>).

Biomarker Pipeline - From Discovery to Development to Validation: Each year more than 20,000 papers are published on cancer biomarkers of which 2000 are on early detection. Unfortunately, very few of these biomarkers are validated and become clinically useful tests that are available to patients. The EDRN pipeline includes several important steps to examine validity and clinical usefulness. As shown in Figure 1, many biomarkers fall out of this pipeline due to a variety of reasons. Common factors include (1) the biomarker lacks sufficient sensitivity and/or specificity to be clinically useful, (2) the inability to reproduce the results using another set of biospecimens, (3) the assay has poor analytical reproducibility, and (4) the inability to distinguish early stage cancer from confounding conditions, e.g. pancreatic cancer from pancreatitis. Consequently, the biomarker pipeline remains sparsely populated beyond the initial discovery phase and shares challenges similar to those involved in drug discovery. The EDRN ensures that these challenges are addressed by the appropriate expertise as provided by the various components of EDRN (Figure 2). EDRN investigators have more than 1300 biomarkers (multiple biomarkers as part of panels) at the various stages of the pipeline and some are awaiting validation studies.

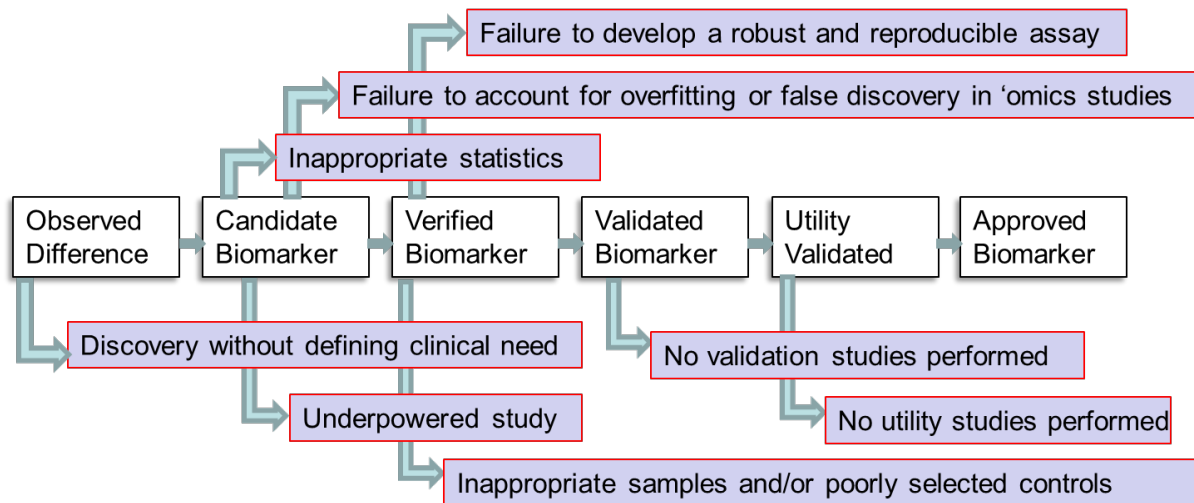


Figure 1: Pitfalls in Biomarker Validation

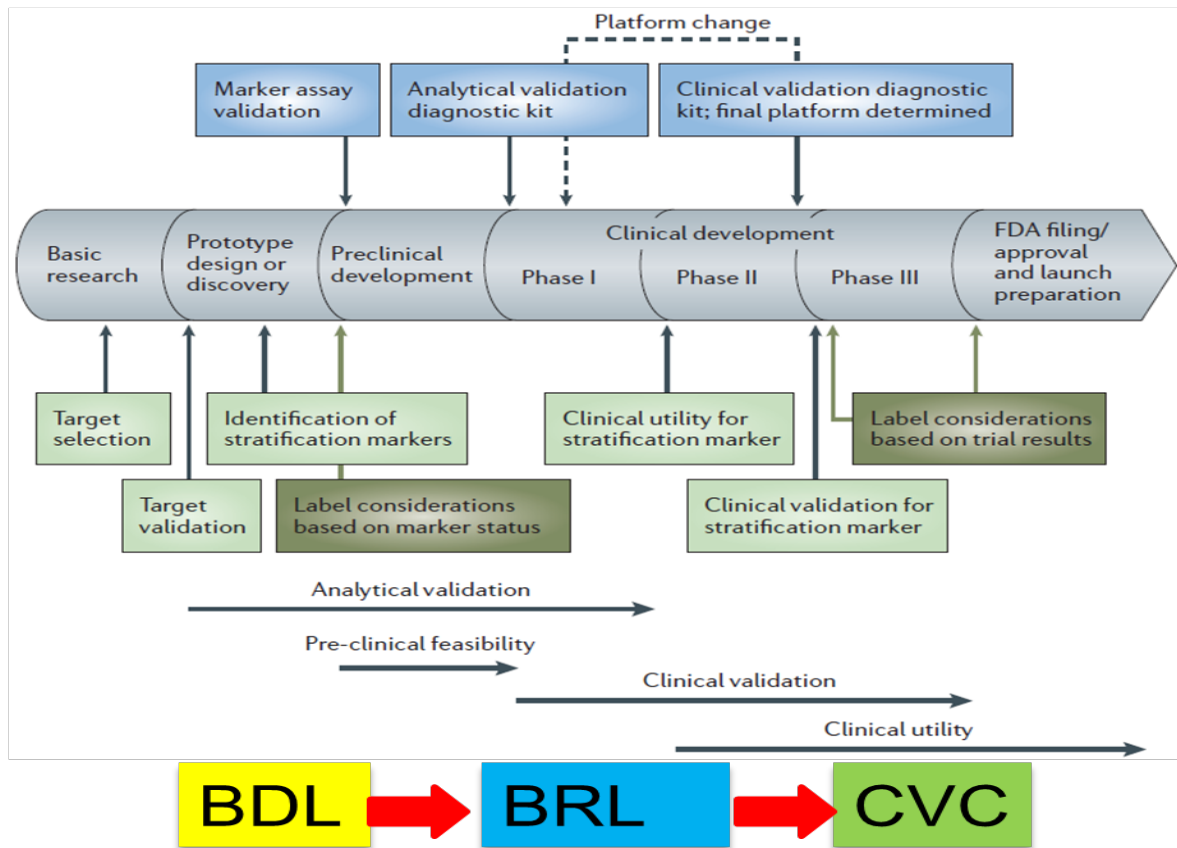
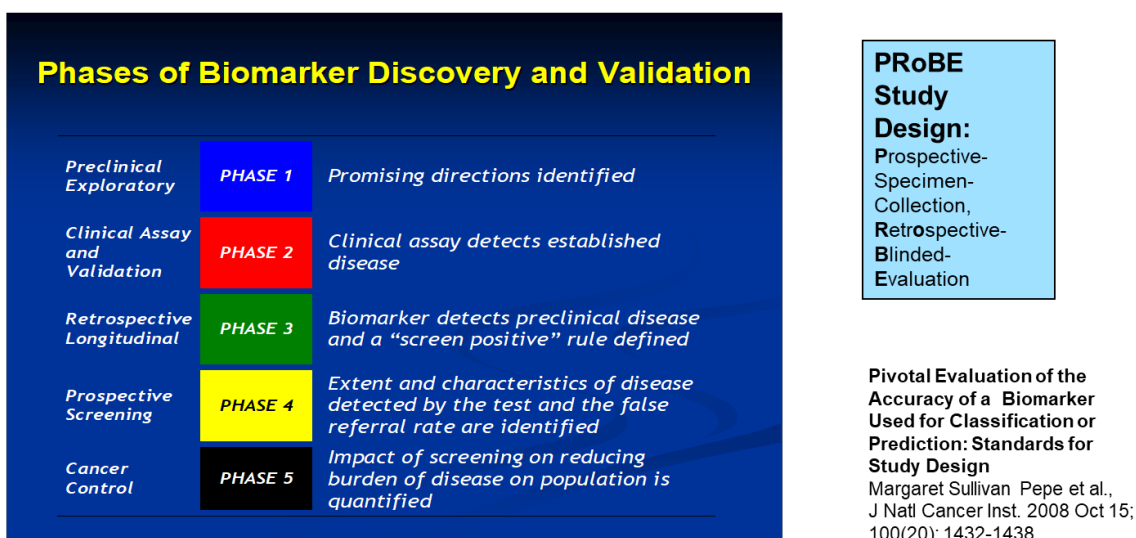


Figure 2: Biomarker Pipeline

Process, Prioritization, and Performance: EDRN DMCC statisticians, led by Margaret Pepe, developed a 5-phase approach to biomarker development that provides a systematic approach to discovery, development, validation and implementation (Figure 3). They also developed a study design approach (PRoBE) that provides a rigorous set of criteria to reduce bias during all phases of biomarker discovery and validation. Together they are used by the EDRN to help inform the “go” or “no go” decision process and determine which biomarkers to move forward.

The EDRN Biospecimen Reference Sets have been very useful in facilitating the “go” or “no go” decision process. These specimen reference sets are sets of samples with cases and controls statistically powered for a specific intended clinical application, and they allow direct comparisons and assessment of the performance characteristics of individual candidate biomarkers in a blinded fashion. These biospecimen reference sets are described in more detail in the section on EDRN Collaborative Environment. The Collaborative Ovarian Cancer Validation Study is an example of the use of a biospecimen set.



Phases of Biomarker Development for Early Detection of Cancer
 Margaret Sullivan Pepe et al., J Natl Cancer Inst. 2001 Jul 18; 93(14): 1054–1061.

Citations: >1300

Citations: >400

Figure 3: A phased approach to biomarker discovery, validation and implementation.

The EDRN serves not only as an ‘accelerator’ of the development and validation of biomarkers, but also serves as a ‘brake’ to unsubstantiated claims. A 6-marker panel for ovarian cancer developed by an investigator from Yale University indicated sensitivity of 95.3% and specificity of 99.4% as compared to CA-125 (72% and 95% respectively) in a case-control study. A similar performance was observed on an independent sample set from GOG (Gynecologic Oncology Group) biorepository. Therefore, a Phase 3 validation study was conducted by EDRN using

Prostate, Lung, Colon and Ovarian Cancer (PLCO) Screening Trial samples to see if the performance will hold on pre-clinical specimens, the intended clinical application. Unfortunately, the panel failed to meet the performance of detecting ovarian cancer in pre-clinical samples.

The EDRN has assembled more than 954 biomarkers in Phase 2 or Phase 3, which are being validated or ready to be validated either individually or as a part a panel (Table 1).

Table 1: EDRN Biomarkers in Phases of Development and Validation

Organ	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 4
Bladder	26	26	10	0
Breast	501	315	113	0
Colon	35	26	6	0
Esophagus	12	12	12	1
Head & Neck	8	0	0	0
Liver	51	49	31	0
Lung	179	79	31	1*
Ovary	317	304	99	3
Pancreas	96	89	30	1
Prostate	450	54	21	0
Total by Phase	1675	954	353	6

*- Mesothelioma

Collaborative Approach and Environment

This integrated structure of the EDRN is a unique and important aspect of the network’s efficiency and productivity. The bringing together of investigators with expertise in cancer biology and biomarker development (the BDLs) with clinicians having expertise in cancer screening and early diagnosis and with access to appropriate patient populations and specimens (CVCs) ensures that the discovery efforts are performed with specific diagnostic requirements in mind – in what patient population and for what purpose will the biomarkers or imaging modality be used, and what performance (sensitivity and specificity) and accuracy are required to make them clinically useful. Too often, discovery efforts by non-EDRN investigators are not closely aligned with potential clinical applications, e.g., use only late stage cancers or only healthy controls with no confounding conditions. It is notable that more than 50% of the biomarkers or panels being validated by the EDRN CVCs were developed by EDRN BDLs.

Collaborative Groups are an important aspect of the EDRN structure. These EDRN groups are organized around specific cancer types, and all EDRN PIs, co-investigators and many associate members are members of one or more of these collaborative groups. They have monthly conference calls and meet twice a year in person to update each other on their progress and to develop collaborative projects that use the resources of all the investigators. These projects frequently involve comparing the performance of biomarkers from different laboratories in a common set of biospecimens and when appropriate combining these biomarkers to create a panel. These projects are supported by the grantees' set-aside funds, which are restricted to this purpose. Many of these projects are described in this report's section on Research Advances and Collaborative Projects. The design and outcome of a collaborative project on ovarian cancer are outlined in Figures 4 and 5.

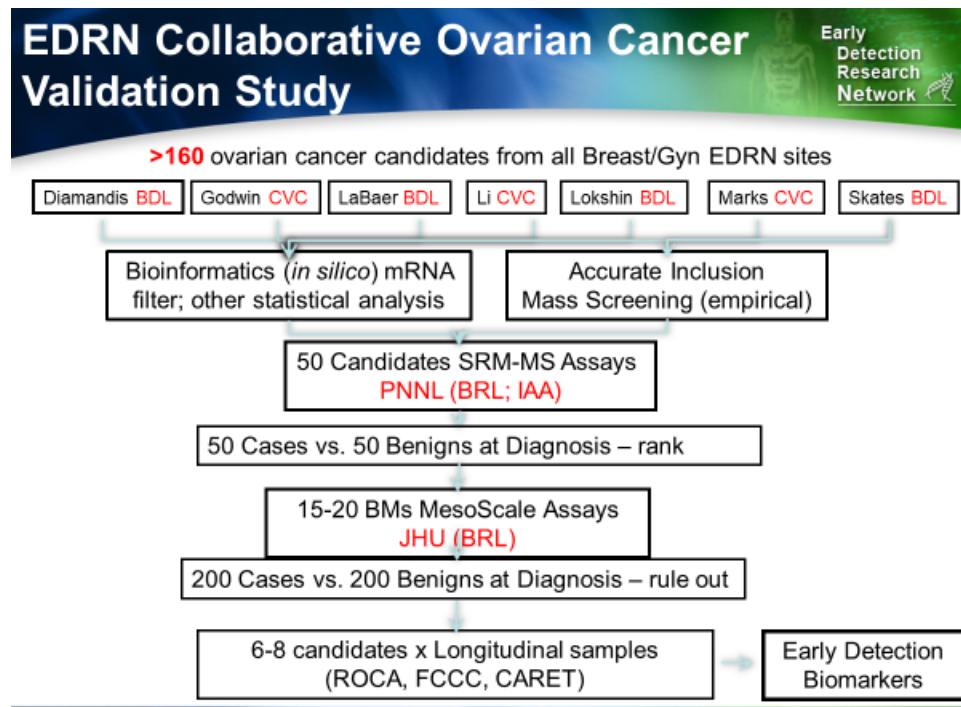


Figure 4: Design of an EDRN Ovarian Cancer Biomarker Project

Comparison of Biomarker Sensitivity at 95% Specificity for Phase II and Phase III Study Results

Marker	Phase II	Phase III			
	All cases	Cases diagnosed ≤6 mo after draw	Cases diagnosed >6–12 mo after draw	Cases diagnosed >12–18 mo after draw	Cases diagnosed >18 mo after draw
CA125	0.73	0.86	0.33	0.12	0.03
HE4	0.57	0.73	0.23	0.18	0.12
Transthyretin	0.47	0.02	0.05	0.12	0.09
CA15.3	0.46	0.45	0.05	0.27	0.03
CA72.4 ^a	0.40	0.44	0.14	0.20	0.06
IGFBP2	0.38	0.09	0.00	0.00	0.03
Mesothelin	0.35	0.40	0.00	0.06	0.00
Prolactin	0.34	0.13	0.09	0.12	0.03
Apolipoprotein	0.34	0.07	0.05	0.12	0.19
Spondin-2	0.28	0.11	0.14	0.06	0.12
Transferrin	0.23	0.09	0.09	0.00	0.00
MIF	0.15	0.18	0.09	0.00	0.18
B2M	0.05	0.09	0.05	0.00	0.15

^aAssay changed between phase II and phase III (see Materials and Methods).

Figure 5: Results of an EDRN Ovarian Cancer Biomarker Project

The EDRN program values collective accomplishments and measures its successes on team activities, thus distinguishing itself from other funding mechanisms. Working in teams enhances collaboration and cultivates brainstorming. As a result, more ideas are developed, and productivity improves. Teams often are better at problem solving, finishing difficult tasks and boosting creativity. EDRN also serves as a Hub for several sister programs engaged in biomarker research related to early detection that help enrich the biomarker pipeline for validation by facilitating dialogue and sharing of information (Figure 6).

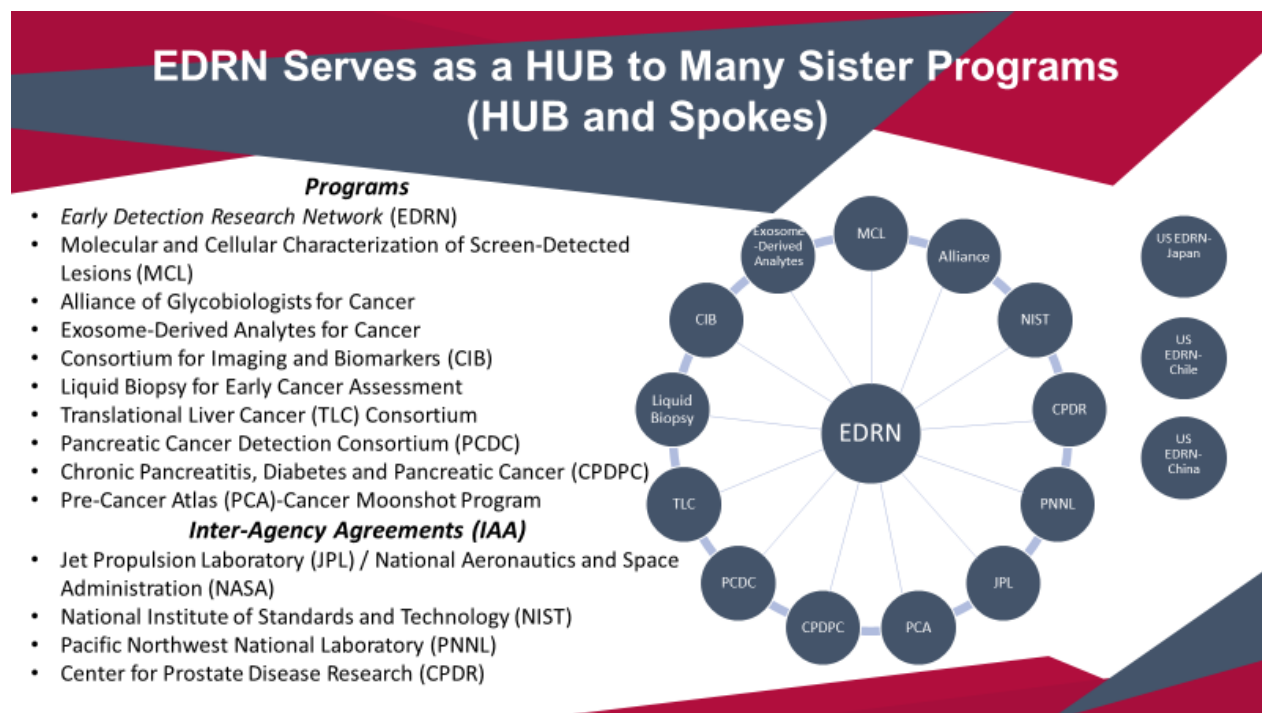


Figure 6: EDRN serves as a biomarker research Hub

Innovative Funding Mechanisms: Set-Aside and Core Funds

Set-aside Funds: EDRN awards include ‘set-aside’ funds that can only be used for new team and other collaborative projects that take advantage of the expertise, resources, and platforms of several different PIs. These funds account for thirty percent of EDRN investigators’ awards. Requests for the use of set-aside funds are reviewed by the EDRN Steering Committee and the release of the funds is contingent upon the advice of the EDRN leadership and authorization by the NCI.

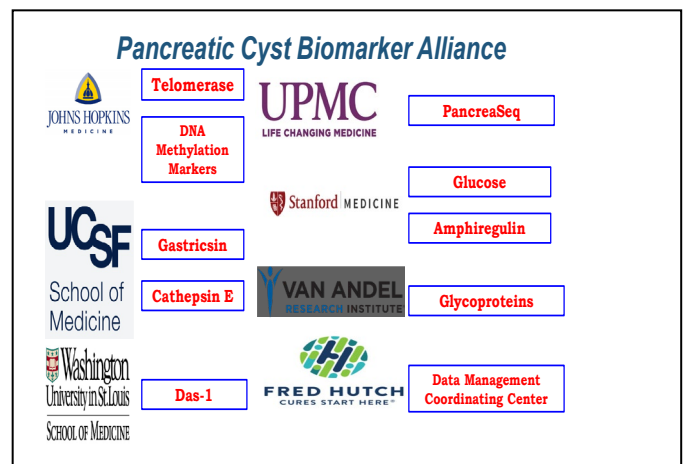
Core or Headquarters Funds: The EDRN has developed innovative funding mechanisms to drive collaboration within the network and with investigators outside of the EDRN. These funds reside at the Data Management and Coordinating Center (DMCC) and are used to support post-award projects. Requests for the release of these funds are reviewed by the EDRN Steering Committee and NCI. They are used primarily to support large multi-center biomarker validation studies that involve patient accrual, biospecimen collections, and assays of defined biomarkers. For example, in this cycle, these funds are being used to support studies to validate stool and blood-based biomarkers for colorectal cancer, blood-based biomarkers for mesothelioma, tissue biomarkers for prostate cancer upgrading, MRI/US-fusion to improve the accuracy of prostate needle biopsies, and uterine lavage tDNA and blood biomarkers for ovarian cancer early detection.

Core Funds are also used to support the coordination of biospecimen collections from multiple centers (both EDRN and non-EDRN) to be used for future biomarker verification and validation. For example, in this cycle, the EDRN’s DMCC provided the initial support and continues to provide the infrastructure to support the accrual of patients with new-onset diabetes (NOD), which can be an early symptom of pancreatic cancer in patients who are otherwise asymptomatic. Biospecimens and clinical information from the patients will be used to identify and validate biomarkers to detect pancreatic cancer in patients with NOD.

New-Onset Diabetes Cohort

Among the most compelling needs for pancreatic ductal adenocarcinoma (PDAC) research is to develop a rational, evidence-based strategy to detect this cancer at an early, resectable stage. Currently, patients with new-onset diabetes (NOD) are one of the few “actionable” high-risk groups for PDAC. The three-year cumulative incidence of PDAC in NOD patients is ~0.85%. The NOD study will recruit 10,000 subjects over the age of 50 years with new-onset diabetes to (i) collect clinically annotated biospecimens from pre-symptomatic PDAC subjects and type 2 Diabetes Mellitus controls, (ii) estimate the probability of PDAC in the prospectively assembled NOD cohort, and (iii) establish a specimen reference set to validate emerging tests to identify high risk NOD patients for PDAC. diagnostic workup.

Another collaborative project being supported by EDRN Core Funds is the Pancreatic Cyst Biomarker Validation Study, which will test and validate biomarkers for distinguishing aggressive from non-aggressive pancreatic cysts. Intraductal papillary mucinous neoplasm (IPMN) and mucinous cystic neoplasm (MCN) are high-prevalence lesions and are detected in 0.6 to 1.8% abdominal computed tomography (CT) scans in the U.S. One-third of patients with IPMNs have an associated invasive carcinoma at the time of diagnosis; MCNs can progress to pancreatic ductal adenocarcinoma, and one-third of patients with resected MCNs have cancer.



Currently, it is difficult to distinguish precancerous mucinous cysts from benign non-mucinous cysts, and the timing and frequency of malignant progression within the mucinous cysts is unknown. Consequently, there is a need for accurate biomarkers to detect high-grade dysplasia and determine the risk of progression. For this EDRN-funded study, investigators from three consortia (EDRN, the Pancreatic Cancer Detection Consortium (PCDC) and the Chronic Pancreatitis Diabetes and Pancreatic Cancer Consortium) proposed to validate pancreatic cyst fluid biomarkers for the discrimination of patients at high-risk for developing or presenting with pancreatic cancer within a pancreatic cyst.

The markers being tested include genomic markers (KRAS, GNAS, VHL, TP53, PIK3CA, and PTEN); glycomic markers (MUC5AC:WGA, MUC5AC:BGH and endorepellin); telomerase assay; DNA methylation (SOX17, FOXE1, PTCHD2, SLIT2, EYAA4, and SFRP1); amphiregulin expression and glucometer glucose; gastricsin and cathepsin E; and Das-1. Six sites have contributed specimens for this study.

EDRN has also begun a multi-site prospective collection of pancreatic cystic fluids along with blood and plasma from those individuals who develop pancreatic cancer and those who do not.

EDRN Biospecimen Reference Sets

These specimen reference sets are sets of samples with cases and controls statistically powered for a specific intended clinical application to allow the rapid assessment of technologies and biomarkers discovered through a variety of technology platforms. Multiple EDRN sites contribute specimens to these sets, which is critical as single sites rarely have sufficient numbers of early stage cancers. These sets allow the direct comparison and assessment of the performance characteristics of different platforms, as well as the performance characteristics of individual candidate biomarkers using the same specimens in a blinded fashion. For example, the EDRN pancreatic cancer reference set is comprised of serum/plasma samples from subjects with pancreatic cancer (n=60 early stage and 40 late stage cancers), chronic pancreatitis (n=63), acute benign biliary obstruction (n=31), and healthy controls (n=61).

Nine EDRN reference and validation sets are stored at NCI Frederick, which ensures their availability to the entire research community (Table 2: EDRN Biospecimen Reference Sets).

Additional information on the individual sets can be obtained by following the link:

<https://edrn.nci.nih.gov/resources/sample-reference-sets>.

Also, in most instances when the EDRN undertakes a biomarker validation study, additional aliquots of specimens are collected to allow for the validation of future biomarkers. For example, biospecimens from a hepatocellular carcinoma (HCC) biomarker validation study were used to create a biospecimen validation set that contains specimens from 800 patients with HCC and 800 cirrhosis controls.

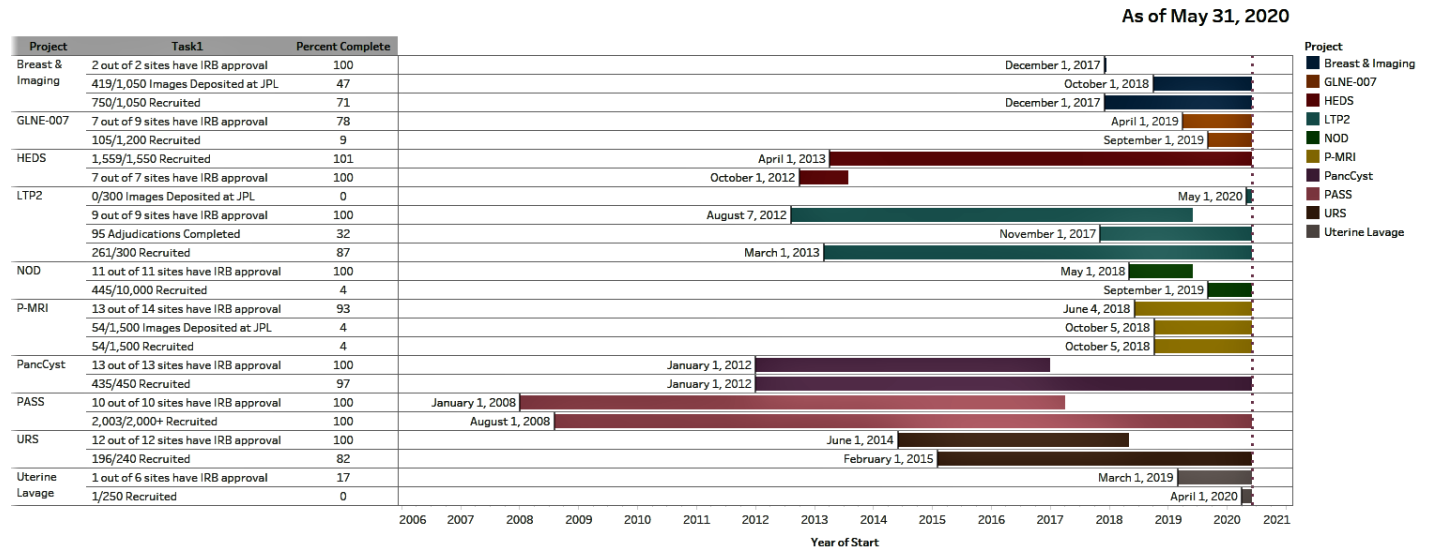
For example, Core Funds are supporting the collection of longitudinal specimens from patients with cirrhosis, many of whom go on to develop HCC. This unique collection will be used to validate biomarkers and algorithms to detect early stage HCC that are currently not detected by ultrasound. HCC accounts for approximately 85-90% of all primary liver cancers. The five-year survival rate for patients detected with early stage HCC is greater than 70% with transplant or resection, but for patients with advanced HCC, the 5-year survival is less than 5%. The fraction of HCC detected early could be increased by improved imaging methods, more sensitive and specific cancer biomarkers and tailoring surveillance protocols based on etiology and

ethnicity/race. Better risk stratification could help identify additional high-risk patients that need to be in surveillance programs. Identifying and improving the surveillance of patients at risk may help reduce mortality due to liver cancer. This prospective collection, EDRN Hepatocellular Carcinoma Early Detection Strategy Study (HEDS), is described in the section on Building Scientific Resources.

Table 2: EDRN Biospecimen Reference Sets

Reference Set	Type of Specimens	Participants #	Participant Groups
Bladder Cancer	Serum, whole urine, DNA from blood	497	Bladder cancer cases Healthy controls High Risk controls
Breast Cancer	Serum, plasma, buffy coat	832	Pre-diagnosis specimens DCIS cases Invasive cancer cases LCIS cases Benign → later cancer cases Normal → later cancer cases Benign Disease Atypia controls Benign Disease non-Atypia controls Normal controls
Cancers in Women Endometrium, Ovary, Breast	Serum, plasma	536	Cases (pooled) Controls (individual and pooled)
Colon Cancer	Serum, plasma, whole urine	150	Cases Adenoma controls Normal controls
Liver Cancer	Serum, plasma	871	Cases Controls
Lung Cancer	Serum, plasma	1,205	Cases Controls High risk with CT nodule controls High risk with no CT nodule controls
Pancreatic Cancer	Serum, plasma	255	Cases Controls
Prostate Cancer	Serum, plasma, buffy coat, RNA, supernatant fluid, whole urine	900	Initial Biopsy w/ Cancer cases Repeat Biopsy w/ Cancer cases Confirmed but no biopsy controls Initial Biopsy w/o Cancer controls Repeat Biopsy w/o Cancer controls
Prostate Cancer (retrospective)	Serum	663	Cases Controls

EDRN Core Funds are currently used to support collections of biospecimens (Figure 7).



Start Day for each Percent Complete broken down by Project and Task1. Color shows details about Project. Size shows sum of Dur. The marks are labeled by Min Start Date by Project Month.

Figure 7: Ongoing Projects Supported by Core Funds

Scientific Accomplishments

Continuous Improvement

The development of biomarkers and panels of biomarkers for cancer risk, early detection, diagnosis and prognosis by the EDRN is a continuous, iterative process of discovery, verification and validation (Figure 8). These improvements can be incremental or achieved with a breakthrough discovery. Developed and implemented diagnostic tests may provide clinically useful information, but their performances may be less than optimal, e.g., they could benefit from better sensitivity and/or specificity. This is why it is so useful to adopt the principles of continuous improvement.

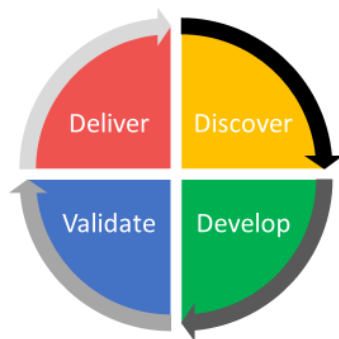


Figure 8: Biomarker Discovery, Development, Validation and Delivery is an Iterative Process

Since these improvements frequently happen beyond a typical five-year funding cycle, it is difficult to delineate the exclusive successes within each five-year cycle. Therefore, while this report focuses on advancements since 2015, where relevant we include progress from previous funding cycles.

The development of the MiPS assay (Mi-prostate score) provides an example of continuous improvement (Figure 9). MiPS helps evaluate a patient's risk of having prostate cancer and the degree of its aggressiveness; it is usually performed after an abnormal PSA test and a digital rectal exam. MiPS combines three biomarkers (serum PSA, urinary PCA3, and urinary TMPRSS2:ERG). With a high Negative Predictive Value (98%) and sensitivity (97%), this test has been shown to avert 27% of unnecessary biopsies. EDRN investigators have made significant contributions to the discovery and validation of these biomarkers.

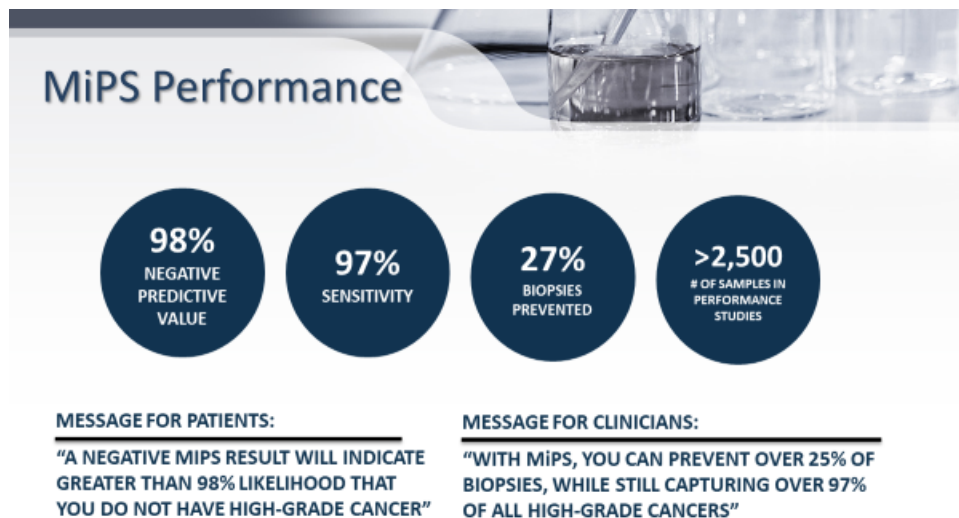


Figure 9. MiPS reduces unnecessary biopsies for prostate cancer by 27%.

FDA-Approved Biomarker Tests and Devices Available in CLIA Laboratories

To improve the clinical utility of PSA for early detection and risk assessment, EDRN investigators validated the utility of PCA3. Prostate cancer antigen 3 (PCA3) is a prostate-specific gene that has been detected in over 90% of prostate cancers. PCA3 mRNA expression was found to be independent of prostate volume and serum PSA and is higher in patients who had larger, more aggressive tumors. EDRN investigators in collaboration with Hologic/GenProbe Co. developed a urine assay, ProgenSA, which obtained FDA approval in 2012.

EDRN investigators' discovery of frequent recurrent genetic rearrangements, which generate fusion transcripts such as TMPRSS2-ERG, led to the development of new highly specific genetic assays. Genetic rearrangements occur in about 50% of all prostate cancers; TMPRSS2-ERG rearrangement is the most frequent (>90% of all rearrangements). ERG is not expressed in normal prostatic tissue and is detected only in high grade prostatic intraepithelial neoplasia and prostate tumors. The test now is available in a CLIA-certified laboratory.

The primary mission of the EDRN is to develop and validate biomarkers and imaging modalities that are used to improve early cancer detection. One measure of success is the number of these biomarkers that are approved for use in a clinical setting. At the time of the last renewal in 2014, five diagnostic tests to which EDRN investigators made significant contributions had been approved by the FDA (two for prostate cancer, two for ovarian cancer, and one for hepatocellular carcinoma) and 10 EDRN-supported diagnostic tests were in CLIA-certified laboratories.

In the past five years, EDRN investigators have contributed to the development and validation of three FDA approved tests or diagnostic devices; Overa for ovarian cancer, CancerSEEK for ovarian and pancreatic cancer, and EsoCheck for Barrett's esophagus or esophageal cancer.

Overa: EDRN investigators Daniel Chan and Zhen Zhang participated in the development and FDA approval of this test for determining ovarian cancer risk. Overa is specifically designed to help determine which patients with pelvic masses are at low risk for malignancy and to better identify patients who are at high risk for having a malignancy and, therefore, would benefit from care with a specialized gynecologic oncology surgeon. Vermillion, Inc. offers this test.

CancerSEEK: EDRN investigators Kenneth Kinzler, Robert Schoen, Randall Brand, Peter Allen and Samir Hanash participated in the development and testing of CancerSEEK, which is a multianalyte test that simultaneously determines the levels of eight proteins and the presence of cancer gene mutations in circulating DNA. The test is aimed at screening for eight common cancer types that account for more than 60 percent of cancer deaths in the U.S. Five of the cancers covered by the test currently have no screening test. Thrive Earlier Detection Corp. has received FDA's Breakthrough Device designation for the detection of genetic mutations and proteins associated with pancreatic and ovarian cancers.

EsoCheck: EDRN investigator Sanford Markowitz developed this device, which is designed to allow patients to undergo a non-invasive five-minute office-based procedure to detect Barrett's Esophagus (BE) and esophageal cancer without the need for endoscopy. EsoCheck's ability to sample cells from a targeted area of the esophagus has the potential to save lives through the early detection of esophageal abnormalities. PAVmed markets this device.

In the past five years, EDRN investigators have also developed nine new diagnostic tests which are in CLIA-certified laboratories, eight of which are or will soon be in commercial laboratories; MiCheck for prostate cancer, Videssa Breast for breast cancer, DetermaVu for lung cancer, Precepta for lung cancer, Esoguard for Barrett's esophagus, Decipher Prostate Cancer Classifier Test for prostate cancer, urinary RNAs for prostate cancer, metabolite and protein panel for pancreatic cancer, and mucin panel for pancreatic cancer. Four of these are described in more detail below.

Videssa Breast: EDRN investigators Karen Anderson and Joshua LaBaer in collaboration with Provista discovered tumor associated auto-antibody biomarkers which were validated in two large prospective, randomized, double blinded multicenter clinical studies. This test is used in women with abnormal or difficult to interpret mammograms to help inform them whether further diagnostic procedures may be warranted (e.g.,

additional imaging or biopsy) or provide assurance that they likely do not have breast cancer. This test is CLIA approved.

Percepta: EDRN investigator Avrum Spira and Allegro Diagnostic performed the original research that resulted in the development of this CLIA approved test. The test is a 23-gene expression panel that measures mRNA in cells taken from bronchial brushes during bronchoscopy. The Percepta classifier identifies patients with lung nodules who are at low risk of cancer following an inconclusive bronchoscopy result, making it possible to monitor these patients with CT scans in lieu of invasive diagnostic procedure. Validation of this test involved two clinical studies; The Airway Epithelial Genes Expression (AEGIS -1 and AEGIS -2) in the Diagnosis of Lung Cancer. Veracyte Inc. offers the test, which is reimbursed by Medicare. Approximately 1000 tests are being performed per quarter in the U.S. with close to 3000 cumulative tests since July 2019.

Decipher Prostate Cancer Classifier Test: *SChLAP1* and other prostate cancer associated lncRNAs discovered by EDRN investigator Arul Chinnaiyan were licensed to GenomeDx and are included in this classifier test. Decipher test is a tissue-based tumor genomic test that predicts the probability of metastasis within 5 years of radical prostatectomy, and provides an independent assessment of tumor aggressiveness, information that is distinct from that provided by the Gleason score or PSA.

A list of all FDA and CLIA approved biomarkers and devices to which EDRN investigators have made significant contributions are given in Tables 3 and 4.

Table 3: FDA Approved Biomarkers and Devices

Biomarker/Device	Purpose	Year of Approval	EDRN Principal Investigators Industrial Partner
EsoCheck	Allows patients to undergo a non-invasive five-minute office-based procedure to detect Barrett’s Esophagus	2019 FDA-cleared tool	Sanford Markowitz, M.D. PAVmed
CancerSEEK	Detection of genetic mutations associated with pancreatic and ovarian cancer.	2019 FDA break through device	Ken Kinzler, Ph.D., Robert Schoen, M.D., Randall Brand, M.D., Peter Allen, M.D., and Samir Hanash, M.D. Thrive Detection Corp.
Overa (5 analytes: CA 125, apolipoprotein A-1, transferrin, follicle-stimulating hormone, human epididymis protein 4)	Prediction of ovarian cancer risk in women with adnexal mass.	2016	Zhen Zhang, Ph.D. and Daniel Chan, Ph.D. Vermillion
%[-2]proPSA	Reduce the number of unnecessary initial biopsies during prostate cancer screening.	2012	Daniel Chan, Ph.D. Beckman Coulter
PCA3 (Prostate Cancer Antigen 3) RNA in urine	Determination of need for biopsy or repeat-biopsy in patients at risk for prostate cancer.	2012	John Wei, M.D. Gen-Probe
Risk of Ovarian Malignancy (ROMA) algorithm	Prediction of ovarian cancer risk in women with pelvic mass.	2011	Steve Skates, Ph.D. Fujirebio Diagnostics
DCP and AFP-L3; a combined panel of biomarkers	Risk assessment for development of hepatocellular carcinoma.	2011	Jorge Marrero, M.D. Wako Diagnostics
OVA1™ (5 analytes: CA 125, prealbumin, apolipoprotein A-1, beta2 microglobulin, transferrin)	Prediction of ovarian cancer risk in women with adnexal mass.	2009	Daniel Chan, Ph.D. and Zhen Zhang, Ph.D. Vermillion

Table 4: Biomarker Tests in Clinical Laboratory Improvement Amendments (CLIA) Laboratories

Biomarker Assay	Purpose	EDRN Principal Investigator CLIA Laboratory
MiCheck (Glypican-1 protein and related signaling molecules)	Differentiate aggressive prostate cancer from non-aggressive cancer and no cancer	Daniel Chan, Ph.D. Minomic, Inc
Videssa (a multi-protein biomarker blood test)	Distinguish benign from malignant breast lesions	Joshua LaBaer, M.D., and Karen Anderson M.D. Provista
DetermaVu	Liquid biopsy test intended to facilitate clinical decision making in lung cancer	Louise Showe, Ph.D. OncoCyte
Percepta (23-gene expression panel)	Detection of lung cancer	Avrum Spira, M.D. Veracyte Inc.
Esoguard (methylated vimentin and cyclin A1)	Detection of Barrett's esophagus	Sanford Markowitz, M.D. PAVmed
Decipher Prostate Cancer Classifier Test (<i>SChLAP1</i> and other lncRNAs)	Determination of prostate cancer aggressiveness	Arul Chinnaiyan, M.D., Ph.D. GenomeDx
Protein panel (TIMP1, LRG1 and CA19-9)	Detection of pancreatic cancer	Samir Hanash M.D., Ph.D. Cosmos Wisdom
Mucin panel (MUC4, MUC5AC, MUC16 and MUC 17)	Detection of pancreatic cancer	Surinder Batra, Ph.D. Sanguine Diagnostic and Therapeutics
MiPS (Mi Prostate Score Urine test), Multiplex analysis of TMPRSS2:ERG gene fusion, PCA3 and serum PSA	Detection of prostate cancer	Arul Chinnaiyan, M.D., Ph.D. Gen-Probe
IHC and FISH for TMPRSS2:ERG fusion	Detection of prostate cancer	Arul Chinnaiyan, M.D., Ph.D. Roche

GSTP1 methylation	Decision making regarding repeat biopsies in prostate cancer	David Sidransky, M.D. OncoMethylome
Mitochondrial deletion	Detection of prostate cancer	National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) Mitomics
Proteomic panel	Detection of lung cancer	William Rom, M.D., M.P.H. Celera
Aptamer-based markers	Detection of lung cancer	William Rom, M.D., M.P.H. Somalogic
80-gene panel** **(This panel has been refined; Percepta®, a 23-gene classifier, is now available through Veracyte)	Detection of lung cancer	Avrum Spira, M.D., M.Sc. Allegro/Veracyte
Vimentin methylation in stool	Detection of colon cancer	Sanford Markowitz, M.D., Ph.D. LabCorp
Galectin-3 ligand	Detection of advanced adenomas and colon cancer	Robert Bresalier, M.D. BG Medicine
GP73	Risk of hepatocellular carcinoma	Timothy Block, Ph.D. Beckman Coulter
8-gene Panel for Barrett's Esophagus (BE)	Progression Prediction of BE	Stephen Meltzer, M.D. Diagnovus

Ongoing Validation Studies

During this cycle, EDRN CVCs are conducting 15 biomarker and/or imaging validation studies; two on colorectal cancer, two on pancreatic cancer, three on breast cancer, two on ovarian cancer, two on prostate cancer, one on esophageal cancer, and three on lung cancer. Most of these are on track to complete patient accrual and finish the assays by early 2021. A list of these studies is given in Table 5.

Table 5: Ongoing EDRN Validation Studies

Cancer	Principal Investigator(s)	Biomarker(s) or Imaging modality	Status
Colorectal cancer and advanced adenomas	Dean Brenner	1) Methylated vimentin 2) Galectin-3 ligand 3) Hypomethylated LINE 4) Methylated BCAT1/IKZF1	Specimens collected and being assayed. Sufficient specimens from controls and advanced adenomas have been collected. PI and industrial partners are in discussions with the FDA.
Colorectal cancer	Paul Lampe	1) Protein and glycomic hybrid panel (BAG4, IL6ST, VWF, EGFR and CD44) 2) Glycomic hybrid panel +Galectin-3 ligand	Developed monoclonal Abs and developed Luminex assays Testing in Endoscopy II samples from (Copenhagen).
Esophageal cancer and Barrett's esophagus	Sanford Markowitz	Methylated VIM and CCNA1	Collecting specimens.
Pancreatic cancer	Surinder Batra Randall Brand	1) Protein panel (MUC4, MUC5AC and CA19-9) 2) Protein panel (trefoil factors 1, 2, and 3)	Performing assays on an additional 250 cases and controls.
Pancreatic cancer	Anirban Maitra Samir Hanash	1) Protein panel (CA19-9, TIMP-1 and LRG-1) 2) Protein panel and metabolites	Assays have been performed on pre-diagnostic samples from PLCO and WHI.
Lung cancer – indeterminate pulmonary nodules	Pierre Massion Robert Gillies Mathew Schabath	1) miRNAs in sputum to determine risk 2) Cyfra 21-1 by FSA-BSI 3) Radiomic signature	1) Candidate miRNA panel is being tested. 2) All samples and images collected. Data analysis ongoing
Lung cancer	Avrum Spira	Clinical model vs. clinical model + 30 gene nasal marker panel	Specimen collection is completed, and assays being performed.

Ovarian cancer	Robert Bast	Four biomarker (CA125, HE4, CA72.4 and anti-TP53 autoantibodies) Risk of Ovarian Cancer Algorithm (ROCA)	Completed assays on 2035 samples from a longitudinal collection. These measurements are being used to generate a classification algorithm.
Ovarian cancer	Charles Drescher	Autoantibodies to TP53 and CST (cancer specific transcripts) -derived antigens	Autoantibodies to TP53 assayed in 450 sample set. Assays on CST being conducted.
Breast cancer	Christopher Li	9 Proteomic 12 autoantibodies 16 glycomic	Markers being assayed in WHI and CHS preclinical sample set.
ER+ breast cancer	Christopher Li Karen Anderson	Autoantibodies	Markers being assayed in preclinical samples from CHS.
Prostate cancer	Martin Sanda	Urine T2:ERG/PCA3 + serum PSA (Mi-Prostate Score)	Decision algorithm defined and results being analyzed.
Prostate cancer	John Wei	mpMRI combined with T2:ERG/PCA3/PSA for detection of high-grade disease	IRB approved and patient accrual started.
Lung cancer	Mathew Schabath Robert Gillies	LDCT – radiomic biomarkers (quantitative image-based feature data) for risk assessment and diagnostic discrimination	Analyzed nested case control from NLST. Recruited 400 lung cancer screening patients (collected images and blood).
Breast cancer	Jeffrey Marks John Heine	Radiomics: (1) full field digital mammography (FFDM) images and (2) digital breast tomosynthesis	Images uploaded to data repository. Methods to analyze these images are being developed.

Novel Approaches, Technologies and Resources

The EDRN has built an array of enabling technologies to help discover and develop biomarkers and enrich the pipeline for future validation studies. Integrated genomic and proteomic technologies are yielding highly innovative strategies for identifying candidate biomarkers for early detection. This effort draws upon the multiple disciplines represented within EDRN (i.e., clinical and basic science, technology development, biostatistics and bioinformatics). This cycle, EDRN has focused on leveraging high-throughput technologies that are amenable to use in clinical settings. Some of the novel technologies and approaches are summarized below.

The Nucleic Acid-Programmable Protein Array (NAPPA)

Developed by Joshua LaBaer, this platform opened the possibility of exploiting the natural tumor-antigen signal amplification provided by autoantibodies to identify novel targets that could be used to develop more sensitive early detection biomarker assays. The Videssa Breast test described above is based on results using this platform. This platform has undergone numerous refinements, including the capability to assay glycoproteins. This is a significant advance as many cancer biomarkers are glycoproteins.

Antibody-free Assays for Biomarkers

Employing highly sensitive targeted mass spectrometry-based technologies is an efficient and cost-effective way to rapidly verify potential candidate biomarkers, and further refine a biomarker panel in pre-clinical validation studies, before further investment in the development of expensive, clinical-grade immunoassays. Pacific Northwest National Laboratory (PNNL), an EDRN Reference Laboratory, has developed and applied high-sensitivity reaction monitoring mass spectrometry-based assays to rapidly identify the most promising candidate biomarkers among long lists of candidate biomarkers developed by EDRN BDLs. In the current EDRN cycle, the PNNL has focused on two objectives: 1) quantitative detection of 50+ selected prostate cancer biomarkers in tissue and bodily fluids and validation of their clinical utility; and 2) multiplexed detection of biomarkers from enriched exosomes and/or secreted biomarkers for early detection, diagnosis, and prognosis of cancers and validation of their potential clinical utility. Successful strategies developed for prostate cancer are also being implemented in studies of other cancers, leveraging the collaborative aspects of the EDRN as a network of interacting centers focused on a common goal.

New DNA Methylation Platform for Melt-analysis of Methylated DNA

James Herman's laboratory at the University of Pittsburgh in collaboration with Jeff Wang at Johns Hopkins University have engineered a complex microfluidic platform to detect rarely methylated genes that will be required for a blood-based diagnostic test. This platform automates DNA extraction and methylation on the microfluidic platform, performs PCR, and then analyzes the products by melt analysis. The time to complete all steps from initial DNA extraction to qPCR is reduced from 7 hours to 4.5 hours with the added advantage that all manipulations are handled robotically and should thus be more reproducible than standard lab handling. It is likely

that other epigenetic EDRN labs will be interested in using this technology. Such a device may transform the approach to detecting and analyzing epi-alleles.

Circular RNAs

Arul Chinnaiyan's laboratory at the University of Michigan has cataloged circular RNA (circRNA) in multiple cancers, which suggests these stable structures could serve as cancer markers in blood or urine. They identified circRNA from more than 2,000 clinical cancer samples and cell line panels and demonstrated that the capture RNA sequencing developed for MiOncoSeq was more robust in detecting circRNA than existing methods and that circRNAs were found to be more stable than linear RNAs. The researchers turned their findings into a database called MiOncoCirc, cataloging the reported circRNAs from tumor samples. This compendium is available to the public as a community research resource.

Radiomics

Several EDRN investigators are exploring the use of radiomics to improve the detection of early stage cancers, particularly breast and lung cancers. Radiomics is the process of converting radiographic images into mineable data. The overarching hypothesis of radiomics is that image features describing size, shape and texture, reflect the underlying tumor pathophysiology and hence, can be developed and qualified as biomarkers for risk prediction, diagnostic discrimination, and prognostication. Radiomics is designed to use standard-of-care images, allowing the development and curation of large data sets that are needed for statistical power. For example, with respect to distinguishing between indolent and aggressive lung cancers, investigators have developed a new class of radiomic features (radial gradient and radial deviation features) to characterize the interface at the peri- and intra-tumoral region. Utilizing separate training and test cohorts, they identified a single parsimonious model that contained two highly informative features that differentiated indolent lung cancers (80% 5-year survival) vs. aggressive lung cancers (10% 5-year survival).

The Field Effect as a Platform for Early Cancer Detection

Many cancers arise in a "field" of molecular alterations resulting from exposure to cancer-causing agents (e.g., smoking, hormones, UV light, diet). There are molecular changes in cytologically normal cells that may reflect clonal expansion of cells from which the tumor ultimately develops or may be related to direct effects of the tumor on surrounding tissue, known as "field cancerization."

Measuring the physiological response of the host to exposure within the "field of injury" could provide early markers of individualized cancer risk in relatively accessible proximate tissue. An example of this is the airway 'field of injury' or 'field cancerization' in lung cancer. Smoking (and other inhaled toxins) alters epithelial cell gene expression throughout the respiratory tract, and an aberrant airway epithelial genomic response to and damage from smoking creates a susceptible microenvironment for cancer initiation, an etiologic "field of injury."

EDRN investigator Avi Spira and colleagues are extending the lung cancer “field” to the nasal epithelium (Figure 10).

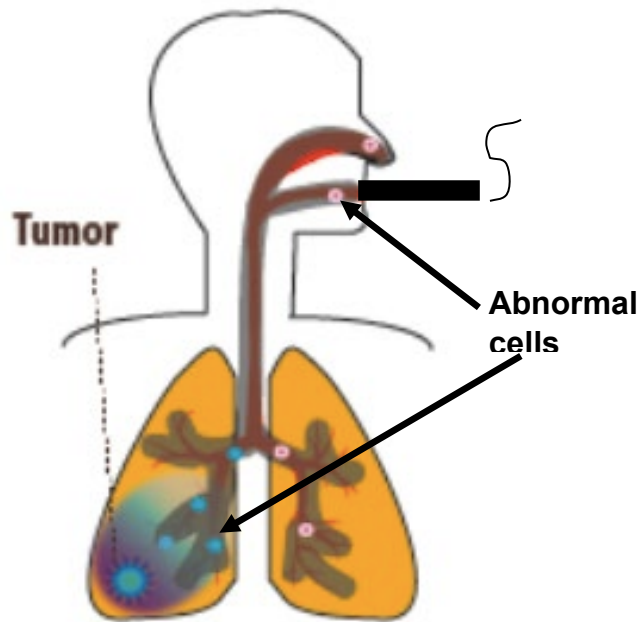


Figure 10: Nasal epithelial gene expression signature associated with lung cancer diagnosis in the indeterminate nodule setting

Research Advances and Collaborative Projects

Within the EDRN there are four organ-specific Collaborative Groups. Every EDRN PI is a member of at least one Collaborative Group, participates in collaborative research projects, and attends monthly conference calls.

Thirty percent of the funds of each EDRN BDL and CVC is set-aside to support collaborative or team projects. These projects involve PIs from multiple EDRN laboratories and centers and frequently include non-EDRN investigators.

Research accomplishments by individual grantees and collaborative projects involving multiple investigators for the four Collaborative Groups are described below.

Colorectal and Other Gastrointestinal Cancers Collaborative Group

In this Collaborative Group there are two CVCs for colorectal cancer, two CVCs for pancreatic cancer, one BDL for pancreatic cancer, one BDL for colorectal cancer, and one BDL for both colorectal and esophageal cancers.

List of EDRN PIs who are members of this collaborative group:

Allen, Peter	Duke University	Pancreas
Batra, Surinder	University of Nebraska Medical Center	Pancreas
Brand, Randall	University of Pittsburgh	Pancreas
Brenner, Dean	University of Michigan	Colorectal
Grady, William	Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center	Colon and Esophagus
Guda, Kishore	Case Western Reserve University	Colon and Esophagus
Haab, Brian	Van Andel Research Institute	Pancreas
Kinzler, Kenneth	Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine	Colorectal
Lampe, Paul	Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center	Colorectal
Maitra, Anirban	M D Anderson Cancer Center	Pancreas
Markowitz, Sanford	Case Western Reserve University	Colon and Esophagus
Schoen, Robert	University of Pittsburgh Cancer Institute	Colorectal
Stass, Sanford	University of Maryland School of Medicine	Colorectal

This Collaborative Group conducts research on colorectal, pancreatic and esophageal cancers. The main goals are (1) to develop and validate blood-based biomarkers with accuracy comparable to FIT to increase the number of people being screened (stool based testing is rejected by 40% of the population) and to develop and validate ctDNA as a biomarker to monitor for early recurrence of colorectal cancer, (2) to develop and validate biomarkers and imaging

methods to detect pancreatic cancer in high-risk groups, (3) to develop and validate biomarkers and imaging methods to determine which pancreatic cysts are cancerous, and (4) to develop and validate a non-endoscopic method to detect Barrett's esophagus and to distinguish dysplastic from non-dysplastic Barrett's esophagus.

There has been substantial progress in the goal to develop and validate blood-based biomarkers for colorectal cancer with accuracy comparable to FIT. Several blood-based biomarkers or panels of biomarkers have shown sensitivity and specificity that exceeds that of FIT and are being validated in large independent cohorts.

- Drs. Kenneth Kinzler and Robert Schoen have combined aneuploidy with the somatic mutation detection and eight standard protein biomarkers used in CancerSEEK, resulting in a median sensitivity of 80% in the eight cancer types, including colorectal and pancreatic cancer, with a specificity of 99%.
- Dr. Dean Brenner and collaborators have shown that a blood-based panel consisting of galectin-3 ligand, CEA and CYFRA21 have better sensitivity and specificity than FIT for both colorectal cancer and advanced adenomas.
- Dr. Paul Lampe has shown that a five-protein marker panel has a sensitivity of 70% for colorectal cancer at 90% specificity.

There has been substantial progress on the goals to develop and validate biomarkers and imaging methods to detect early stage pancreatic cancer and to develop and validate biomarkers and imaging methods to determine which pancreatic cysts are cancerous. Three groups of investigators have identified biomarkers or panels of biomarkers that significantly improve the accuracy of CA19.9 to detect pancreatic cancer and to determine which pancreatic cysts are cancerous. To validate their performance, EDRN investigators are currently accruing additional patients.

- Drs. Surinder Batra and Randall Brand found that the combination of TFF2, MUC5AC, MUC4 and CA19-9 showed an AUC of 0.96 for differentiating early stage pancreatic cancers from benign controls and TFF3, TFF1, MUC5AC and CA19-9 combination provided an AUC of 0.91 for differentiating early stage pancreatic cancers from chronic pancreatitis.
- Drs. Anirban Maitra and Dr. Samir Hanash used decision tree-based techniques to correctly identify 31 cases with only 1 false positive; in comparison, CA19-9 alone only identified 24 cases when restricting false positives to 1. These findings demonstrate that “an OR rule” using CA199 and the combination of TIMP1 and LRG1 yields better performance than CA199 alone for identifying asymptomatic pancreatic cancer cases.

Dr. Brian Haab and collaborators reported a statistically significant improvement for identifying asymptomatic pancreatic cancer cases by combining sTRA marker with CA19-9 (75% accuracy) over CA19-9 alone (65% accuracy). The improvement was achieved using blinded case/control calls with pre-determined cut-offs and classification rules. The blinded calls gave 95% specificity

and 54% sensitivity. A positive feature of the test is its simplicity: it is a simple combination between CA19.9 and sTRA. Cut-offs can be set for either marker so that the combination test is optimized to detect cancer with high specificity; patients who are elevated in either sTRA or CA19.9 are classified as a 'case.' This simplicity likely contributed to the success of the validation and bodes well for eventual clinical use.

Drs. Sanford Markowitz, William Grady and Kishore Guda have made substantial progress on developing biomarkers that can distinguish dysplastic from non-dysplastic Barrett's Esophagus. A two methylated-marker panel (Up10 and Up35-2) was identified that shows 98% specificity on normal squamous samples, 91% specificity on non-dysplastic Barrett's Esophagus, 48% sensitivity on high grade dysplasia and 57% sensitivity on esophageal adenocarcinoma. When combined with TP53 mutation, the 3-marker panel showed 98% specificity on normal squamous and 89% specificity on non-dysplastic Barrett's Esophagus, while showing 56% sensitivity and 76% sensitivity on esophageal adenocarcinoma, respectively. Dr. Markowitz developed EsoCheck, a device that allows patients to undergo a non-invasive five-minute office-based procedure to detect Barrett's Esophagus without the need for endoscopy.

Collaborative Projects on CRC

Steps Towards Validation of Plasma Biomarkers for the Detection of Colorectal Adenoma and Cancer

Participants:

Paul Lampe	Fred Hutchison Cancer Research Center
Ziding Feng	Fred Hutchison Cancer Research Center
Dean Brenner	University of Michigan
Robert Bresalier	M D Anderson Cancer Center
Hans Jørgen Nielsen	University of Copenhagen-Hvidovre Hospital

Aim 1: Define the sensitivity and specificity of specified plasma biomarkers for the detection of advanced adenoma and/or colorectal cancer with samples with positive and negative FIT values.

Aim 2: Develop a combination rule for the markers and compare it with FIT and test whether it has the required minimum 75% sensitivity at $\geq 70\%$ specificity for colorectal cancer, which would surpass the performance of the currently available blood-based test.

Aim 3: They will test the combination rule fixed in Aim 2 using samples from an EDRN PRoBE-compliant screening trial.



Status: Biospecimens from University of Copenhagen-Hvidovre Hospital are being prepared for shipping to the sites in the US.

Addition of Methylated Markers to CancerSEEK Assay

Participants:

Sanford Markowitz Case Western Reserve University
 William Grady Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center
 Robert Schoen University of Pittsburgh

Aim: Determine whether the addition of circulating methylated DNA can improve the sensitivity of CancerSEEK for early stage colorectal cancer.

Biomarkers for Reducing Mortality of Cancers of the Colon Sandford Markowitz, Robert Schoen, William Grady					
Candidate Biomarker	Discovery			Pre-validation	Validation
	Discovery	Predictive Analysis	Assay Refinement	Blinded Limited Cross-Sectional	Large Cross-Sectional
Collaborative Projects					
Biomarker panel for high risk colon neoplasia, and methylated genes of colorectal cancer risk					
Collaborative Project: Addition of Methylated Markers to CancerSEEK (Markowitz & Schoen)					

ctDNA for the Early Detection and Monitoring of Colorectal Cancer

Participants:

Robert Schoen University of Pittsburgh Medical Center
 Amir Borhani University of Pittsburgh Medical Center
 Brenda Diergaarde University of Pittsburgh Medical Center

The goal of this project is to collect and analyze the baseline and follow-up computerized tomography (CT) scans from subjects with stage III colorectal cancer (CRC) enrolled in the prospective monitoring study evaluating serial assessment of circulating tumor DNA (ctDNA; clinicaltrial.gov: NCT02842203).

Aim 1: Determine associations between clinical outcome and radiomic characteristics of tumors, as well as morphomic features on pre-operative CT imaging. Radiomic features of tumors and morphomic analysis of body tissues remote from the tumor may be associated with clinical outcome. Using the baseline scans from the monitoring cohort and long-term clinical follow-up

information, the relationship between tumor and tissue characteristics and subsequent risk of recurrence will be assessed.

Aim 2. Perform a longitudinal assessment of morphomic changes on CT imaging in relation to clinical outcome: Longitudinal morphomic changes may be associated with and predict clinical outcome. Using serial assessment of morphomic parameters on CT scanning, the investigator will evaluate changes in these parameters in subjects whose cancer recurs compared to those whose cancer does not recur.

Aim 3: Determine the association of morphomic changes with serial ctDNA levels. Elevated levels of ctDNA may predate overt, radiographic evidence of colorectal cancer recurrence. However, it is possible that morphomic changes may accompany progression to cancer. Longitudinal changes in morphomic features in relation to sequential ctDNA monitoring will be evaluated.

Status:

Currently building a comprehensive dataset for prediction of recurrence that will be applicable for Machine Learning, combining clinical data, longitudinal measurement of biomarkers (ctDNA and CEA) and CT parameters.

Collaborative Projects on Pancreatic Cancer

A Biomarker Bake-off in Early Stage Pancreatic Cancer

Participants:

Randall Brand	University of Pittsburgh
Anirban Maitra	MD Anderson Cancer Center
Ying Huang	Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center
Brian Haab	Van Andel Research Institute
Paul Lampe	Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center
Samir Hanash	MD Anderson Cancer Center
Surinder Batra	University of Nebraska Medical Center
Anna Lokshin	University of Pittsburgh

The EDRN Pancreas Subgroup developed team projects with the goals of rigorously evaluating candidate biomarkers for pancreatic cancer and determining the performance of novel biomarker combinations. The CVCs were instrumental in assembling a set of sera and plasma samples from cases and controls. The cases were primarily patients with resectable pancreatic ductal adenocarcinoma (PDAC), and a smaller number with advanced PDAC. To enable secondary analyses on other, rarer types of peri-ampullary cancers, the team included samples from cholangiocarcinomas, mucinous cystic tumors, pancreatic neuroendocrine tumors, and ampullary carcinomas. The controls were made up of patients with chronic pancreatitis, benign stricture of

the bile duct, chronic diabetes, or benign pancreatic cyst, as well as subjects with no symptoms. The participating investigators from five different laboratories performed the biomarker assays on the samples. All the investigators were blinded to the diagnostic status of the samples. Dr. Huang at the DMCC at Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center evaluated the performance of the markers and assessed potential novel combinations of biomarkers, including cross-laboratory combinations.

Status:

In the first team project, various approaches were applied to develop panels using biomarkers across labs for separating PDACs from benign and healthy controls, targeting optimization of sensitivity at 95% and 90% specificity. This identified a few candidate panels that improve performance over CA19-9 alone. In particular, an 8-marker panel (CA19-9+CA19-9.sTRA+Thrombospondin+DCD+TIMP1+MUC4+Angiostatin+PSM2) and a 2-marker panel (CA19-9+CA199.sTRA) improved sensitivity at 95% specificity of CA19-9 alone (0.54) to 0.61 and 0.62 and improved sensitivity at 90% specificity of CA19-9 alone (0.61) to 0.69 and 0.70 (as below).

	AUC		Sen at 95% spe		Sen at 90% spe	
	Naïve	CV	Naïve	CV	Naïve	CV
CA19-9	0.85	0.85	0.5	0.54	0.54	0.61
8 marker	0.91	0.84	0.79	0.61	0.82	0.69
2 marker	0.86	0.84	0.68	0.62	0.72	0.7

Two tiers of biomarkers (panels) were proposed for evaluation in future pre-diagnostic samples, based on their performance in separating pancreatic cancer from benign controls.

First tier: A panel consisting of CA19-9, CA19-9:sTRA, and MUC16:sTRA was validated in the pancreatic cancer bake-off project as improving over the standard CA19-9 assay alone. Based on pre-specified threshold that ensures high specificity, this panel had sensitivity 53.5% (95% CI=42.3% to 66.2%), specificity 94.3% (95% CI=88.8% to 98.9%).

Second tier: The markers listed in the table below went through independent blinded validation with estimated area under the ROC curve exceeding 0.60.

	Lab	AUC (95% CI)
Thrombospondin	UPMC	0.713 (0.624, 0.790)
LRG1	MD Anderson	0.637 (0.544, 0.723)

TIMP1	MD Anderson	0.635 (0.549, 0.724)
CA19-9:sTRA	Van Andel	0.857 (0.792, 0.916)
MUC5AC:sTRA	Van Andel	0.695 (0.602, 0.768)
MUC5AC	UNMC	0.678 (0.598, 0.757)

Overall, these biomarker studies, involving multiple sample sources, several experimental sites, and independent statistical analyses, demonstrated the effectiveness of the Collaborative Group in performing complex studies in a short time period. The studies also demonstrated the value of having close collaborations between clinical, experimental, and statistical sites. The current team project proposes to examine the performance of these markers on asymptomatic preclinical samples, alone or in combination with CA19-9.

EDRN Pancreatic Cyst Biomarker Validation Study

Participants:

This project is led by Aatur Singhi, University of Pittsburgh.

Other participants:

Michael Goggins	Johns Hopkins University
Walter Park	Stanford University
Charles Craik	University of California San Francisco
Randall Brand	University of Pittsburgh
Brian Haab	Van Andel Research Institute
Koushik Das	Washington University
James Farrell	Yale
Ziding Feng	Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center

This project was developed after the 2016 Alliance of Consortia for Pancreatic Cancer meeting. Investigators from three consortia proposed to validate pancreatic cyst fluid biomarkers for the discrimination of patients at high risk for developing or presenting with pancreatic ductal adenocarcinoma within a pancreatic cyst. The markers to be tested include genomic markers, glycomic markers, telomerase assay; SOX17, FOXE1, PTCHD2, SLIT2, EYAA4, and SFRP1; amphiregulin expression and glucometer glucose; gastricsin and cathepsin E; and Das-1.

Aim 1: Assemble a set of biospecimens from 350 pancreatic cysts with diagnostic pathology.

Aim 2: Determine the ability of biomarkers to distinguish mucinous from non-mucinous cysts.

Aim 3: Determine whether the cysts contain advanced neoplasia.

Status:

Aim 1: Specimens from the cysts have been collected and distributed to the testing sites.

Aim 2: Distinguish mucinous from non-mucinous cysts. Results from these blinded assays were analyzed by EDRN DMCC.

Assay (Pancreatic Cyst Biomarker Alliance Investigator)	Mucinous vs. Non-Mucinous Cysts	
	Sensitivity	Specificity
DNA Sequencing: <i>KRAS, GNAS, VHL, CTNNB1, TP53, PIK3CA & PTEN</i> (Aatur Singhi)	86%	100%
Protein expression: MUC5AC:WGA, MUC5AC:BGH & endorepellin (Brian Haab)	92%	94%
Amphiregulin expression & glucometer glucose (Walter Park)	100%	72%
Protease activity: Gastricsin & Cathepsin E (Charles Craik)	93%	100%

Aim 3: Determine the presence of advanced neoplasia. Results from these blinded assays were analyzed by EDRN DMCC.

Assay (Pancreatic Cyst Biomarker Alliance Investigator)	Presence vs. Absence of Advanced Neoplasia	
	Sensitivity	Specificity
DNA Sequencing: <i>KRAS, GNAS, VHL, CTNNB1, TP53, PIK3CA & PTEN</i> (Aatur Singhi)	88%	100%
DNA Methylation: <i>SOX17, FOXE1, PTCHD2, SLIT2, EYA4 & SFRP1</i> (Michael Goggins)	84%	89%
Protein expression: Das-1 (Koushik Das)	91%	96%
Protein activity: Telomerase (Michael Goggins)	74%	93%

[Collaborative Projects on Barrett’s Esophagus](#)

Assess Utility of Non-Endoscopic Methylation Biomarker Based Detection of Barrett’s Esophagus (BE) in an At-Risk Screening Population

Participants:

Sanford Markowitz Case Comprehensive Cancer Center
William Grady Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center


The goal is to assess the utility of non-endoscopic methylation biomarker-based detection of Barrett’s esophagus (BE) in an at-risk screening population. The Barrett’s esophagus translational research network (BETRNet) is conducting a multi-center clinical trial in subjects with chronic gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD) who meet criteria for BE screening using a molecular epigenetic marker panel developed through EDRN with a novel non-endoscopic balloon-based esophageal sampling device.

Aim 1: Measure the sensitivity and specificity of a two marker EDRN developed panel assay for detecting BE using a balloon device in an adult population with GERD symptoms.

Status:

Recruiting patients and collecting biospecimens using the balloon-based esophageal sampling device.

Biomarkers for Reducing Mortality of Cancers of the Esophagus Sandford Markowitz, Kishore Guda, and William Grady					
Candidate Biomarker	Discovery			Pre-validation	Validation
	Discovery	Predictive Analysis	Assay Refinement	Blinded Limited Cross-Sectional	Large Cross-Sectional
Collaborative Projects					
Methylated DNA biomarkers for detection of Barrett’s esophagus (BE), HGD, and EAC, using DNA retrieved by esophageal brushings.					
Methylated DNA and lincRNA biomarkers to distinguish Barrett’s esophagus versus progression of Barrett’s esophagus to HGD.					
Discovery of methylated DNA loci and/or coding or non-coding RNAs to identify biomarkers able to identify marker negative HGD and EAC of esophageal neoplasia.					
Supplemental Project: Develop an Ion Torrent Assay for methylated Vim and methylated CCNA1.					

Core Fund Project: Assess the utility of non-endoscopic methylation biomarker based detection of BE in an at-risk screening population.					
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Prostate and Other Urological Cancers Collaborative Group

In this Collaborative Group there are two CVCs and three BDLs. Investigators from Pacific Northwest National Laboratory and from the Center for Prostate Disease Research, DOD, are also members of this group.

List of EDNRN PIs who are members of this collaborative group:

Aebersold, Ruedi	Institute for Molecular Systems Biology	Prostate
Boutros, Paul	The University of California, Los Angeles	Prostate
Chan, Daniel	Johns Hopkins Medical Institutions	Prostate
Chinnaiyan, Arul	University of Michigan	Prostate
Kislinger, Thomas	University of Toronto	Prostate
Leach, Robin	UT Health Science Center at San Antonio	Prostate
Liu, Tao	Pacific Northwest National Laboratory	Prostate
Petrovics, Gorge	Center for Prostate Disease Research, DOD	Prostate
Rodland, Karin	Pacific Northwest National Laboratory	Prostate
Sanda, Martin	Emory University	Prostate
Semmes, John	Eastern Virginia Medical School	Prostate
Tomlins, Scott	University of Michigan	Prostate
Zhang, Hui	Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine	Prostate

The overarching goal of this Collaborative Group is to improve early detection of prostate cancer using molecular markers (RNA, DNA, protein, metabolites) primarily in blood or urine, and to predict the presence of aggressive prostate cancer on histopathology of subsequent biopsy or prostatectomy specimens, either alone or in combination with imaging features. The two clinical problems currently being addressed are (1) developing non-invasive tests to distinguish indolent cancers (histopathological Grade Group I prostate cancers, which do not need treatment) from aggressive cancers (histopathological Grade Groups II, III, IV or V), treatment of which reduces cancer death, and (2) determining whether MRI prostate imaging and biomarkers, used either

alone or in combination with imaging biomarkers, can improve the prediction of cancer extent and aggressiveness to determine suitability for active surveillance or treatment.

Dr. Arul Chinnaiyan's laboratory identified 121 novel, differentially-expressed prostate cancer (PCa) long noncoding RNA (lncRNAs), including SChLAP1, which is overexpressed in a subset of tumors and associated with more aggressive disease. SChLAP1 levels independently predict poor outcomes, including metastasis and prostate cancer-specific mortality. Another class of promising markers are based on circular RNA (circRNA). Candidate prostate cancer circRNAs biomarkers were also detected in urine. The new cancer markers, (lncRNAs and circRNAs) will be added to MiPS-50 panel (my prostate score), which includes the fusion transcript T2-ERG, lncRNA PCA3 and blood PSA and another 40 RNAs, and will be subjected to verification and validation studies.

Dr. Martin Sanda conducted a validation study, which demonstrated that combining urinary T2-ERG and PCA3 at thresholds that preserved 95% sensitivity for detecting aggressive prostate cancer improved specificity from 18% to 39%. He also demonstrated that the combined panel of PCA3, T2-ERG and *phi* test at sensitivity of 97% achieved a specificity of ~45%, as compared to 18% with PSA alone or 27% with *phi* alone.

Dr. Hui Zhang showed that urinary glycosylated proteins, ACPP, CD63, LOX, CLU, PSA are associated with aggressive prostate cancer. Additional markers, which show a great promise but need further development include CS1, PTGD, SERPINA1, LRG1, KLK11, SCGB1A1, AZGP1, CSTA. She also conducted a verification study for fucosylated PSA as a serum marker for aggressive prostate cancer.

Drs. John Semmes, Paul Boutros and Thomas Kislinger combined targeted proteomics with computational biology to discover robust proteomic signatures for prostate cancer. A panel of 34 candidates were verified in an independent cohort. The urine proteomic signature for extracapsular prostate cancer could be used for detection of patients with aggressive cancers.

Drs. Gorge Petrovics and Albert Dobi developed a panel of eight genes (*ERG*, *GGT1*, *HDAC1*, *KLK2*, *MYO6*, *PLA2G7*, *BICD1* and *CACNAID*) that was able to distinguish between prostate cancer patients that progressed to biochemical recurrence from those that did not. In addition, they performed systematic whole genome analyses and identified alterations that differentiate African American (AA) and Caucasian American (CA) prostate cancer genomes. A recurrent deletion on chromosome 3q13.31, centering on the LSAMP locus, was prevalent in tumors from AA men. Interestingly, carriers of this deletion experienced more rapid disease progression. In contrast, PTEN and ERG were significantly lower in prostate tumors from AA compared to prostate tumors from CA. Furthermore, the frequency of inter-chromosomal rearrangements was significantly higher in tumors from AA than from CA. The differentially distributed somatic

mutations in prostate cancer across ancestral groups must be considered in the application of markers for precision medicine.

Drs. Tao Liu and Karen Rodland from Pacific Northwest National Laboratory (PNNL) collaborated with the CPDR team to develop a five-protein classifier which combines FOLH1, KLK3, TGFB1, SPARC, and CAMKK2 with existing clinical and pathological standard of care variables. The classifier demonstrated significant improvement in prediction of which patients are likely to develop distant metastasis, achieving an area under the receiver-operating characteristic curve of 0.92 (0.86, 0.99, $p = 0.001$) and a negative predictive value of 92% in the training/testing analysis. This classifier has the potential to stratify patients based on risk of aggressive, metastatic PCa that will require early intervention compared to low-risk patients who could be managed through active surveillance.

Collaborative Projects on Prostate Cancer

Biomarkers and Clinical Parameters Associated with Gleason Score Upgrading (URS)

Participants:

This study is a multi-institutional study with twelve participating institutes that is led by Drs. Robin Leach, UTHSCSA, Martin Sanda, Emory University, and Paul Boutros, UCLA.

Other participants:

Alan Partin	Johns Hopkins University
Robin Leach	University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio
Ian Thompson	University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio
John Semmes	Eastern Virginia Medical School
James Brooks	Stanford University Medical Center
Daniel Lin	University of Washington
Dan Mercola	University of California Irvine
Jaime Landman	University of California Irvine
Martin Sanda	Emory University School of Medicine
Eric Klein	Cleveland Clinic
Dipen Parekh	University of Miami Miller School of Medicine
Ashutosh Tewari	Icahn School of Medicine at Mt. Sinai
Juan Miguel Mosquera	Weill Cornell Medicine
Mark A. Rubin	Weill Cornell Medical College
Ziding Feng	Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center
Yingye Zhang	Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center

The goal of this study is to identify biomarkers that could predict upgrading (Gleason score $\geq 4+3$) of patients initially diagnosed with low-risk cancer (Gleason score ≤ 6). The need for such

markers is based on observations that a significant number of men with low-risk prostate cancer (Gleason score ≤ 6) that were managed through active surveillance and eventually elected to undergo therapy (e.g., surgery or radiation therapy) are diagnosed with significant cancers (Gleason score $\geq 4+3$). The lack of robust biomarkers to predict the presence of aggressive prostate cancer in this clinical setting contributes to the ongoing over-treatment of low-grade localized prostate cancer. To mitigate this problem, the EDRN GU working group is gathering a cohort of men with low-grade disease (Gleason ≤ 6), who ultimately chose to have a prostatectomy. These biological specimens comprise the Upgrading Reference Set (URS). EDRN URS is currently collecting biologics and clinical information on a cohort of 240 men for the purpose of evaluating tests or prediction tools to identify upgrading amongst patients with an initial biopsy diagnosis of Gleason score ≤ 6 cancer. This is the first and only study that has been designed to specifically investigate prostate cancer upgrading, with most other studies focusing on comparison between two groups, progressors and non-progressors.

Aim: Develop a risk assessment tool using commonly collected clinical information from a series of contemporary radical prostatectomies to predict the risk of prostate cancer upgrading to high grade cancer at radical prostatectomy.

Status:

Samples from this cohort are being subjected to germline whole-genome sequencing for each subject in the cohort to validate polygenic risk-score (PRS) markers with respect to upgrading as previously reported. The goal is to not only validate PRS but to also create a resource for all future studies, including enabling low-cost validation of any further germline-based risk markers. This part of the study is conducted in Paul Boutros' laboratory at UCLA.

Prostate Cancer MRI/Ultrasound Fusion-Guided Biopsy Study

Participants:

This project is led by John Wei, University of Michigan and Martin Sanda, Emory University.

Other participants:

Soroush Rais-Bahrami	University of Alabama at Birmingham
Scott Eggener	University of Chicago
Sanoj Punnen	University of Miami
Sandra M. Gaston	University of Miami Miller School of Medicine
Robin J Leach	University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio
Dan Yair Lota	UT Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas
Dan Barocas	Vanderbilt University
Aria Olumi	Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center
Adam Kibel	Brigham and Women's Hospital

Tim McClure
Christopher Filson
Ziding Feng
Robert J. Gillies
Daniel Chan
Dan Crichton

Cornell University
Emory University School of Medicine
Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center
H. Lee Moffitt Cancer Center and Research Institute
Johns Hopkins Medical Institutions
NASA Jet Propulsion Laboratory

Ultrasound and MRI are the two main imaging platforms used to aid prostate cancer diagnosis, identify patients who would most likely benefit from active surveillance (AS) and to minimize overtreatment. Image fusion is a process that integrates the data from these technologies to create a single detailed map of the prostate by merging previously captured MRI images with live transrectal ultrasound images to perform targeted biopsies. There has been a dramatic increase in fusion biopsy prostate MRI, but there is no prior validation study of how to best integrate MRI data with US data and with existing validated biomarkers.

Aim 1: Determine if the addition of prostate MRI to T2:ERG/PCA3/PSA improves specificity for detection of high-grade disease.

Aim 2: Create a new panel that optimizes the value of prostate MRI in early detection.

Aim 3: 1,500 patient accrual and prospective data/sample collection.

The commercialization of MRI-US fusion biopsies has resulted in a dramatic increase in the use of MRI-US imaging for prostate cancer detection of aggressive cancer. Given the availability of validated prostate cancer early detection markers, how best to use MRI in the initial prostate biopsy setting is uncertain. The primary aim of this study is to see if the addition of prostate MRI to a panel including PSA, PCA3, TMPRSS2:ERG will significantly improve specificity for high-grade prostate cancer by 10%.

The subsequent exploratory aims will:

- 1) create an optimal panel of urine and blood biomarkers that will select those cases most likely to benefit from an MRI targeted biopsy,
- 2) directly compare PSA and urinary biomarkers with MRI to determine which ones are value-added in the setting of initial biopsy,
- 3) evaluate changes in these biomarkers and MRI to determine if longitudinal changes predict subsequent high-grade prostate cancer, and
- 4) optimize MRI imaging to improve test performance. Importantly, this study will create a unique, prospective cohort that will become the foundational reference set for a range of future biomarker studies.

Status: Currently, fourteen institutes are participating in the study. Four sites obtained IRB approval and have started enrolling patients. So far, 70 patients have been enrolled in the study.

After the completion of phase 1 (enrollment and testing of 340 patients), EDNR DMCC will conduct an interim analysis. If the results are promising, the study will be expanded to phase 2 and an additional 1,160 patients will be enrolled.

Glycoprotein Biomarkers for the Early Detection of Aggressive Prostate Cancer

Participants:

Hui Zhang	Johns Hopkins University
Lori Sokoll	Johns Hopkins University
Zhen Zheng	Johns Hopkins University

This project aims to determine the performance characteristics of using urinary glycoproteins for the early detection of aggressive prostate cancer (PCa).

Aim 1: Determine the performance of using urinary glycoproteomics and mass spectrometry for the detection of aggressive prostate cancer.

Aim 2: Develop and apply ELISA assays to verify the candidate glycoproteins as non-invasive urinary tests for detecting aggressive prostate cancer.

Status:

By comparing glycoproteins in urine from aggressive (AG) prostate cancer (Gleason score ≥ 8) with non-aggressive (NAG) (Gleason score = 6) the investigators identified differentially expressed glycoproteins. Eight of them, ACPP, CD63, KLK3, KLK11, ANPEP, DSC2, PTGDS, and LRG1, were selected for a pre-validation study. Urine ACPP had a predictive power (AUC=0.739) and consistent outcome was also achieved in two independent analyses where the samples were randomly assigned to discovery and validation sets. When combined with serum PSA testing, its performance was moderately improved resulting in an AUC of 0.824. A urine glycoprotein panel consisted of the down-regulated ACPP with another up-regulated glycoprotein, SERPINA1, successfully differentiated AG PCa from NAG PCa (AUC: 0.782, specificity was 46.9% at 95% sensitivity).

Verification of the data by commercial ELISA of ACPP, KLK3, CD63, KLK11, ANPEP, DSC2, PTGDS, and LRG1 is in progress. While the performances of certain ELISA results were correlated with their glycoproteomic results, the ELISA result for PTGDS was not correlated to its glycoproteomic data, indicating that changes in glycopeptides may be attributed to the glycosylation level. Further analysis was conducted with a developed and evaluated targeted quantitative analysis of the glycopeptides using parallel selected reaction monitoring (SRM) assays. Using the SRM assays, it was possible to verify the association of ACPP with AG PCa, but assays failed to verify PTGDS initial observations.

Status: The plan for the near future is to conduct a validation study on previously collected cohorts such as the PCA3 cohort.

Lung and Upper Aerodigestive Cancers Collaborative Group

In this collaborative group there are two CVCs and four BDLs.

List of EDRN PIs who are members of this collaborative group:

Aberle, Denise	University of California Los Angeles	Lung
Dubinet, Steve	University of California Los Angeles	Lung
Elashoff, David	University of California Los Angeles	Lung
Gillies, Robert	H. Lee Moffitt Cancer Center and Research Institute	Lung
Heine, John	H. Lee Moffitt Cancer Center and Research Institute	Lung
Herman, James	University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine	Lung
Lenburg, Marc	Boston University	Lung
Massion, Pierre	Vanderbilt -Ingram Cancer Center	Lung
Pass, Harvey Ira	New York University School of Medicine	Lung, Mesothelioma
Schabath, Matthew	Lee Moffitt Cancer Center and Research Institute	Lung
Showe, Louise	Wistar Institute	Lung
Spira, Avrum	Boston University	Lung
Stass, Sanford	University of Maryland School of Medicine	Lung
Wang, Tza-Huei	Johns Hopkins Whiting School of Engineering	Lung
Yang, Haining	University of Hawaii	Lung

The primary focus of this Collaborative Group is to develop and validate biomarkers and imaging methods to detect lung cancer among smokers with indeterminate nodules that are detected by low dose CT. Other objectives are (1) to conduct studies using semantic and radiomic image-based features to reduce false positives and distinguish indolent from aggressive pulmonary nodules and (2) to discover and validate biomarkers for the early detection and prognostication of pleural mesothelioma.

Dr. Pierre Massion's Clinical Validation Center is validating biomarkers in collaboration with both EDRN and non-EDRN investigators. The table below summarizes the status of these validation studies.

	Clinical Purpose	Biomarkers	Biospecimens	Phase of Development	Technology	Institution
1	Risk	miRNA signature	Sputum	3	RNA seq	U of Maryland
2	Risk	Gene expression signature	Bronchial Brushings	2	RT-PCR	Veracyte
3	Risk	Autoantibody signature	Serum	3	ELISA	Vanderbilt
4	Risk and diagnosis	Imaging 3D structural analysis	DICOM images	3	Artificial Intelligence	Vanderbilt
5	Diagnosis	ctDNA signature	Blood	3	CAPPSeq	Stanford
6	Diagnosis	C4D, CRP, CYFRA21.1	Blood	3	ELISA	Vanderbilt
7	Diagnosis	FSPG	Molecular imaging	2	PET CT	Vanderbilt
8	Diagnosis	MAYO, CYFRA, Radiomics	Serum and DICOM images	4	BSI, Radiomics	Vanderbilt

Dr. James Herman has conducted Phase 2 studies on a cohort of Chinese subjects presenting with small lung nodules. A four-gene methylation panel of circulating tumor DNA in plasma was found optimal for diagnosis of non-small cell lung cancer showing a sensitivity and specificity of 90% and 71%, respectively, with area under the receiver operating curve (AUC) of 0.88. A recent study has explored measuring these markers in urine in addition to plasma where prediction of lung cancer showed similar performance in both biofluids.

Drs. Avi Spira, Mark Lenburg and Stephen Dubinett previously identified gene-expression changes that are consistent throughout the intrathoracic airway and determined that these genes are enriched among the previously identified changes in the mainstem bronchus of cancer patients, supporting the paradigm of a cancer-related “field of injury” throughout the airway. To understand specifically what cell type(s) contribute to the lung cancer signature, the investigators have refined and are currently validating a biomarker panel in combination with clinical and imaging features. The next steps will be to build a composite biomarker panel and conduct further validation on independent cohorts. One important milestone is that investigators have been able to validate that the lung cancer-associated genes discovered with EDRN funding in the Epithelium Gene Expression in the Diagnosis of Lung Cancer (AEGIS) cohorts are also associated with lung cancer in Detection of Cancer in Military Personnel (DECAMP) cohort. This suggests that the signals are reproducible across cohorts using different measurement technologies and can be extended into the setting of lower disease risk.

Drs. Louise Showe and Kiranmai Gumireddy developed novel, non-invasive blood-based gene signatures that are predictive of diagnosis and prognosis for non-small cell lung cancer (NSCLC) using peripheral blood mononuclear cells from lung cancer patients and high-risk smoking controls. They are currently validating their signature using 600 patient samples collected in the PAXgene system at the site of blood collection. Their preliminary analyses on 242 samples using mRNA and miRNA expression indicates that they are on-target to achieve >90% accuracy. In a

separate study, they have explored the expression of 116 tumor associated antigens and identified AKAP4 expression as a remarkably accurate marker of the presence of a lung cancer. The utility of AKAP4 as a predictive marker for NSCLC has now been further validated in an independent set of samples. Analysis of the combined dataset of 264 NSCLCs and 135 controls gave sensitivities and specificities of 0.92.

Drs. Harvey Pass and Haining Yang are in the process of developing and validating a novel SOMAmer-based proteomic platform (Slow Off-rate Modified Aptamer) in plasma and pleural effusion as diagnostic and prognostic biomarkers for MPM (malignant pleural mesothelioma). SOMAmer reagents consist of a short single-stranded DNA sequence with “protein-like” appendages that allow tight and specific binding to its protein target. The investigators are currently validating an assay that combines a 13 SOMAmer with Fibulin-3 with using new cohorts from the NYU Thoracic Surgery Archives as well as samples from Princess Margaret Cancer Center in Canada and the University of South Glasgow. These investigators are also working to determine the accuracy of high mobility group protein B1 (HMGB1) and its isoforms for the diagnosis of MPM, by comparing the sensitivity and specificity of total HMGB1 in pleural effusion to MRP and Fibulin-3.

Collaborative Projects on Lung Cancer

Validation of Biomarkers to Distinguish Malignant from Benign Nodules Detected by CT.

Participants:

Pierre Massion	Vanderbilt University
Avrum Spira	Boston University
Marc Lenburg	Boston University
James Herman	University of Pittsburgh
Steve Dubinett	University of California Los Angeles
Harvey Pass	New York University
Haining Yang	University of Hawaii
Louise Showe	Wistar Institute
Sanford Stass	University of Maryland
Feng Jiang	University of Maryland
Matthew Schabath	H. Lee Moffitt Cancer and Research Institute
James Willey	University of Toledo Medical Center

Aim 1: Establish a cohort of 300 former or current smokers with fully annotated indeterminate lung nodules across 6 medical centers on whom clinical, radiographic and biospecimen repositories are developed and who are followed prospectively until final diagnosis.

Status: 261 patients have been enrolled.

Aim 2: Determine the individually developed assays/biomarkers to distinguish malignant from benign nodules by investigators listed in Aim 1.

Status: Specimens to be sent to investigators in October 2020.

EDRN-DOD Collaboration to Develop and Validate Biomarkers for Lung Cancer in a High-Risk Cohort

Participants:

Avrum Spira	Boston University
Marc Lenburg	Boston University
Pierre Massion	Vanderbilt University
David Elashoff	University of California Los Angeles
Steve Dubinett	University of California Los Angeles
Ignacio Wistuba	MD Anderson Cancer Center

The Detection of Cancer in Military Personnel (DECAMP consortium) is a multidisciplinary translational research initiative established by the Department of Defense (DoD) in 2011 to develop and validate biomarkers for the early detection of lung cancer. Since its inception, EDRN has joined in building resources by providing additional sites and resources to expedite the accruals. There are two ongoing clinical trials recruiting high-risk smokers from 4 military hospitals and 7 VA facilities: (1) DECAMP 1: 500 current and former smokers (age > 45; pack- yrs > 20) with indeterminate pulmonary nodules (7-30mm) on chest CT followed for 2 years until final diagnosis; and (2) DECAMP 2: 800 high-risk smokers (COPD or first degree relative with lung cancer) who are being screened annually for lung cancer (including LDCT) for 4-5 years. Both cohorts have a comprehensive biosample collection protocol including blood (serum, plasma, PAXgene), sputum, urine, nasal and buccal brushings, as well as endobronchial biopsies and brushings collected at time of bronchoscopy. In the screening study, these biosamples are collected annually, with the exception of bronchoscopy-based samples that are collected at two time points in the screening cohort. Importantly, all clinical imaging and biospecimens are being collected under uniform SOPs and stored centrally.

Aim: Characterize spatial and temporal changes in the airway transcriptome among smokers with lung cancer.

Status: Smokers undergoing surgical lung biopsy/resection for pulmonary nodules were recruited at all 4 medical centers in order to collect airway brushings obtained from multiple regions of the intrathoracic airway alongside tumor tissue. The Group has identified gene-expression changes that are consistent throughout the intrathoracic airway (regardless of location), as well as those that change in a gradient-like manner relative to the tumor location. Importantly, genes that change consistently throughout the airway are enriched among the previously identified changes

in the mainstem bronchus of cancer patients, supporting the paradigm of a cancer-related “field of injury” throughout the airway. The investigators used RNA sequencing on laser-microdissected representative cell populations along the squamous cell carcinoma (SCC) pathologic continuum of patient-matched normal basal cells, premalignant lesions, and tumor cells to identify pathways altered with initiation and progression of SCC within individual patients. These studies, by characterizing the process of malignant transformation, will potentially lead to identification of biomarkers for early lung cancer detection as well as novel strategies for targeted chemoprevention of lung cancer.

Validating an Integrated Biomarker and Imaging Approach in the Evaluation of Indeterminate Pulmonary Nodules (IPN)

Participants:

Eric Grogan	Vanderbilt University
Stephen A. Deppen	Vanderbilt University
Pierre P. Massion	Vanderbilt University
Heidi Chen	Vanderbilt University
Melinda Aldrich	Vanderbilt University
Fabien Maldonado	Vanderbilt University
James Herman	University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine
Darryl Bornhop	Vanderbilt University
Timothy Mullett	University of Kentucky

The proposal is to conduct a Phase 3 prospective biomarker validation study in three collection trials: (1) EDRN Lung Team Project 2 (LTP-2), (2) EDRN supplement-funded CanVFun (Cancer Versus Fungus) consortium, and (3) Detection of Early Lung Cancer Among Military Personnel (DECAMP 2) trial. The primary objective of this work is to use biomarkers to improve the accuracy of the evaluation of Indeterminate Pulmonary Nodules (IPN) in the intermediate risk category.

Aim 1: Develop a Biomarker Probability Score (BPS) for lung cancer in patients with IPNs.

Aim 2: Validate the BPS and evaluate its ability to reclassify IPNs.

Status: Accrual of subjects in histoplasmosis endemic areas (4 sites) is continuing following the delay due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Development of Radiomic Classifiers for Incidental Pulmonary Nodules

Participants:

Matthew Schabath
Robert Gillies

H. Lee Moffitt Cancer and Research Institute
H. Lee Moffitt Cancer and Research Institute

The goal of this project is to develop radiomic classifiers for the management of incidental pulmonary nodules (IPN).

Aim 1: Develop a clinical-radiomics database that includes CT acquisition conditions, extracted radiomic data, pathological data (benign or malignant), radiological impressions, clinical data, genomic data (where available) and patient outcomes (overall survival and progression-free survival).

Aim 2. Develop parsimonious models for diagnostic discrimination and disease behavior. Peritumoral and intratumoral radiomics and patient data will be used to identify a parsimonious model that discriminates between benign and malignant IPNs. Machine-learning and biostatistical approaches, including training and testing, will be applied to identify the most informative sets of quantitative imaging features to differentiate lung cancers versus non-cancerous abnormalities.

Validation of Biomarkers of Risk for the Early Detection of Lung Cancer

Participants:

James Willey
Pierre Massion

University of Toledo Medical Center
Vanderbilt University

The proposal seeks to further develop Low-variant-allele Frequency Actionable Mutation Biomarker (LFAMB) as a biomarker for determining lung cancer risk. The intended use is to first, identify screening eligible patients who have bronchoscopic specimens that may be at low risk and, therefore, may not require additional screening, secondly, to identify patients who do not meet the threshold for CT screening based on lower risk than NLST guidelines, who may have higher risk and, therefore, screening may be of benefit.

Aim 1: Phase 2 biomarker study to develop and validate the Low variant allele Frequency Actionable Mutation Biomarker (LFAMB), a recently discovered test for lung cancer risk that is orthogonal to, and potentially synergistic with, the Lung Cancer Risk Test (LCRT) biomarker.

Status: This phase 2 study has begun.

Validation of Biomarkers of Risk for the Early Detection of Lung Cancer

Participants:

Pierre Massion
Melinda C. Aldrich

Vanderbilt University
Vanderbilt University

The goal of this project is to pilot-test lung cancer screening in a high-risk, under-represented low-income and mostly African American patients. Current efforts have not thus far been able to accomplish this. In this screening study, molecular and genetic strategies for the early detection of lung cancer will be integrated with epidemiology and imaging strategies. The establishment of biomarkers of risk will help identify patients who have early stage lung cancer and allow intervention at a time to improve survival.

Aim 1: Reach out to underserved populations.

Aim 2: Collect and store quality biospecimens for biomarker validation.

Aim 3: Make the repository available to EDRN and the community-at-large, including answering priority goals of the EDRN Lung Cancer Collaborative Group.

Aim 4: Characterize this population at risk for lung cancer risk using epidemiology, imaging, pulmonary function, and biomarkers.

Aim 5: Generate preliminary data for a future application to validate candidate biomarkers of early detection in a larger underserved population that could be done within the larger Southern Community Cohort Study.

Status: Enrollment of subjects from Southern Community Cohort Study in Nashville area completed. To increase enrollment, they are seeking to include in enrollment other minority institutions. Meharry Medical Center has joined.

Integration of Biomarker Signatures from Peripheral Blood for Diagnosis, Prognosis, Remission and Recurrence of Lung Cancer

Participants:

Louise C. Showe	Wistar Institute
Qin Liu	Wistar Institute
Andrew Kossenkov	Wistar Institute
Kiranmai Gumireddy	Wistar Institute

The project aims to transfer the lung cancer biomarker panel developed on the experimental Illumina microarray platform to a clinical assay for the NanoString nCounter system. The second-generation clinical platform is expected to lead to a further improvement in lung cancer screening.

Step 1: Test the NanoString assay with the same samples used to develop the microarray classifier. The custom NanoString panel includes 420 probes identified by the analysis of 600 samples used for the microarray studies.

Status:

The initial test of the new NanoString panel has been tested on a subset of 300 samples (the training set) and the final 200 samples (test set) are in progress. Initial analysis of the training set indicates an accuracy equal to or better than the microarrays and at a sensitivity of 90% the Specificity is 56%. They will complete the validation and then select the subset of probes to be used in step 4.

Step 2: Identify an appropriate standard sample.

Status:

This has been completed. Working with NanoString the investigators designed a highly purified artificial RNA standard that includes sequences of the 420 mRNAs included in the panel. The initial studies calibrated the amount of standard required to provide a signal that was within the range of the PAXgene patient RNAs. The standards serve as a quality control for reagent batches, scanner or technician irregularities.

Step 3: Process 600 training samples on custom array.

Status: They are selecting the minimum NanoString probes needed to maintain accuracy while reducing cost. This will be completed by the end of August 2020 when the validation samples have been completed. The new cartridges with reduced probes will be ordered at this time.

Step 4: Validate the final platform on at least 1400 samples from the existing sample repository

Status:

This is in process and will include samples from five clinical sites plus a set of samples from a collaborator in Israel as well as the 260-plus samples from the EDRN Lung Team Project 2.

Breast and Gynecologic Cancers Collaborative Group

In this Collaborative Group there are one CVC for breast cancer, one CVC for ovarian cancer, one CVC for both breast and ovarian cancer, 3 BDLs for breast cancer, and 2 BDLs for ovarian cancer.

List of EDRN PIs who are members of this collaborative group:

Anderson, Karen	Arizona State University	Breast, Ovarian
Bast, Robert	University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center	Ovarian
Birrer, Michael	University of Arkansas Medical Sciences	Ovarian
Drescher, Charles	Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center	Breast, Ovarian
Heine, John	H. Lee Moffitt Cancer Center and Research Institute	Breast
LaBaer, Joshua	Arizona State University	Breast, Ovarian
Lewis, Michael	Baylor College of Medicine	Breast, Ovarian
Li, Christopher	Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center	Breast, Ovarian

Marks, Jeffrey	Duke University Medical Center	Breast
Paulovich, Amanda	Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center	Breast, Ovarian
Shih, le-Ming	Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine	Ovarian
Skates, Steven	Massachusetts General Hospital	Ovarian
Tang, Cha-Mei	Creatv MicroTech Inc.	Breast
Zhang, Zhen	Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine	Ovarian

This Collaborative Group conducts research on breast and ovarian cancers and the main goals are: (1) to improve the performance of screening mammography, (2) to distinguish benign from malignant breast lesions, (3) to improve early detection of different molecular subtypes of breast cancer, (4) to develop blood tests for early detection of ovarian cancer, (5) to distinguish benign from malignant pelvic masses, (6) to develop high sensitivity uterine sampling tests for high risk patients, and (7) to develop a strategy combining risk stratification, biomarkers, and secondary diagnostic imaging as a cost-effective screen for ovarian cancer in high risk or general populations.

Drs. Amanda Paulovich and Michael Lewis are working to develop a blood test for early detection of breast cancer that can be used to complement mammography. They have used MS/MS to discover human proteins in mouse plasma from animals with 5 types of xenografted tissues: ER+ tumors, HER2+ tumors, “triple negative” tumors, DCIS, and normal breast tissue. They have identified and prioritized human candidate markers circulating in mouse plasma and 138 human plasma samples. An analysis of the 238 most promising proteins is underway. In collaboration with Dr. Andy Godwin, they are evaluating extracellular vesicles as circulating tumor biomarkers.

Dr. Christopher Li’s CVC is conducting a phase 3 validation study to validate biomarkers for early detection of ER+ breast cancer. Their autoantibody and proteomic markers have advanced through three sample sets (WHI discovery, EDRN Reference set and WHI confirmation) and analyses have been completed across these sets to prioritize markers for validation. The autoantibody validation data is currently undergoing statistical analysis. Laboratory assessment of the proteomics biomarkers in a phase 3 validation study using the CHS preclinical set is currently being organized and will begin shortly. Additionally, glycomic biomarkers have been measured in 2 of the 3 sample sets (WHI discovery and EDRN Reference set).

Drs. Joshua LaBaer and Karen Anderson are working on the development of a high-throughput, NAPPA array-based strategy to generate and display synthetic O-linked glycoprotein structures that mimic tumor-specific structural changes. They will use such altered post-translational modifications, which are highly immunogenic, to detect autoantibodies in sera that are specific for glycoproteins as potential biomarkers for the early detection of breast cancer. They have developed a contra-capture platform to generate post-translational modification (PTM) protein

microarrays, which is an improvement of the high-density (HD) NAPPA arrays, displaying 1632 proteins in their unmodified Tn, STn and Core3 glycosylated forms. These are being used to profile anti-glycoprotein autoantibodies (TAAb-AGP) in patients with breast cancer and benign breast diseases to identify early detection biomarkers that will be further validated on independent, blinded cohorts of serum specimens.

Drs. Jeffrey Marks and Cha-Mei Tang are participating in the prospective accrual of 1050 subjects undergoing breast cancer diagnosis obtaining blood, demographic, clinical, and follow-up data as well as breast tomosynthesis radiographic images. The purpose is to determine the presence of Cancer Associated Macrophage-Like (CAML) cells as potential blood biomarkers for the early detection of breast cancer, as well as to extract features from digital mammograms and perform decision fusion analysis to predict the presence of cancer from imaged masses and microcalcifications. More than 750 individuals have been accrued so far and fresh bloods have been analyzed for CAML cell detection.

Drs. Steve Skates and Michael Birrer are conducting studies towards the discovery and development of circulating protein biomarkers as well as the identification of specific mutations in tumor DNA derived from uterine lavage liquids for the early detection of high grade ovarian cancer (HGSOC) in women at normal risk or in women carrying BRCA1 or BRCA2 deleterious mutations (see below under Collaborative Group Projects). Toward that end, >1100 cancer associated proteins were interrogated in serial samples obtained from women prior to the clinical diagnosis of a HGSOC and matched healthy controls. >70 candidates were identified which are currently further analyzed to select an optimal panel of the 20 or fewer best candidates that maximize sensitivity for earliest stage and spectrum of disease, while maintaining a high specificity of at least 95% with the eventual aim of adjusting the cut-off to achieve 98% specificity.

Drs. Robert Bast and Steven Skates, in collaboration with Charles Drescher, are focusing on determining the specificity and positive predictive value for a 4-biomarker ROCA (ROCA2) that includes CA125, HE4, CA72.4 and anti-TP53 autoantibodies in a two-stage strategy for the early detection of ovarian cancer in postmenopausal women at average risk for the disease. This is nested in the ongoing multi-site NROSS screening trial led by Dr. Bast. To date, along the lines of the NROSS trial, 39,688 samples have been obtained from 7,342 postmenopausal women at conventional risk with 4,807 active participants. Twenty-four operations have been prompted by the ROCA algorithm and have detected 15 cases of ovarian cancer with 10 of them (67%) in Stage I or II. This observed significant stage-shift in detection indicates that no more than 3 operations will be required to detect each case of ovarian cancer using this strategy – i.e., a PPV of >30%.

Drs. Zhen Zhang and Ie-Ming Shih are focused on the identification and prioritization of biomarkers to be included in a multivariate classification algorithm for the detection of early

stage and low-volume ovarian cancer. To that end, they have analyzed liquid-based cervical canal cytology samples and plasma samples by mass spectrometry and array-based quantitative proteomic analysis as well as tissue specimens from tubal p53 signature lesions, serous tubal intraepithelial carcinomas (STICs), and HGSOC. Several differentially expressed proteins have been identified in STICS and HGSOC but not in p53 signature lesions, which could be utilized as potential biomarkers for the development of molecular imaging approaches for the early detection of STICS in high-risk women. Furthermore, they have conducted genome-wide comparative methylation analysis among tubal p53 signature lesions, STICs, and HGSOC. Regions of high-confidence STIC-specific differential hypermethylation were identified. Data from this analysis also suggests that most STICs are epigenetically similar to HGSOCs and share hypermethylated DNA regions that warrant further evaluation for potential use as biomarkers for the early detection of HGSOC.

Collaborative Projects on Breast and Ovarian Cancer

Phase 3 Validation of Biomarkers of ER+ Breast Cancer

Participants:

Christopher Li	Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center
Karen Anderson	Arizona State University
Paul Lampe	Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center

Aim 1: Preliminary validation of proteomic, autoantibody and glycomic markers specific for ER+ breast cancer early detection in the EDRN Reference Set. This set had 115 ER+ cases and 149 controls.

Status: Completed.

Aim 2: The most promising of these markers (9 proteomic, 12 autoantibodies and 16 glycomic markers) was validated in 121 ER+/PR+ ductal cases and 121 matched controls from Women's Health Initiative 1. This validated panel will be used to inform the timing of subsequent mammography in patients with a negative mammogram.

Status: Completed.

Aim 3: Validation using preclinical CHS samples: 68 ER+ cases and 204 matched controls from the Cardiovascular Health Study (CHS).

Status: Ongoing.

Circulating Human Tumor-derived Proteins Identified in PDX Models are Contained within Exosomes

Participants:

Amanda Paulovich	Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center,
Michael Lewis	Baylor College of Medicine
Andrew Godwin	University of Kansas Medical Center

Aim: Determine whether circulating human tumor-derived proteins identified in PDX models are contained within exosomes.

Status: EV-enriched samples from Dr. Godwin have been received by the Paulovich lab and are undergoing analysis by mass spectrometry.

Circulating Autoantibody Biomarkers for Early Detection of Ovarian Cancer

Participants:

Robert Bast	M D Anderson Cancer Center
Karen Lu	M D Anderson Cancer Center
Karen Anderson	Arizona State University
Charles Drescher	Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center
Zhen Zhang	Johns Hopkins University
Steven Skates	Massachusetts General Hospital

The purpose is to conduct a Phase 2 validation study to determine the performance of anti-TP53 AAbs and 15 other AAb biomarkers to distinguish epithelial ovarian cancer (EOC) from healthy individuals and women with benign pelvic masses.

Aim 1: Compare four TP53 autoantibodies plasma assay platforms.

Status:

Five different anti-TP53 AAb assays ((xMAP (MDACC), Luminex SeroMap (FHCRC), Meso Scale Discovery (ASU), RAPID (ASU), and the Roche Elecys Cobas (MDACC)) were tested on diagnostic samples from 502 healthy women, 200 women with benign pelvic masses, and 250 patients with EOC. At 98% specificity, sensitivity ranged from 13.2 - 21.6% across the assays, with the RAPID assay (ASU) demonstrating the greatest sensitivity.

Aim 2: Identify novel autoantibodies to complement CA125 and TP53.

Status: This project is evaluating complementarity of assays for anti-TP53 (RAPID), 15 other AAbs, and HE4 Ag-AAb complexes with each other and with CA125 using the same discovery set utilized in the project described above. At 98% specificity, 70% of the 63 early stage (I-II) EOC cases are positive for CA125. Addition of anti-TP53 detects an additional 3.2%, anti-

CTAG1 3.2% and the combination of both 4.8%. Due to COVID-19 associated delays, assays are still pending for HE4 Ag-AAb complexes at MD Anderson and 4 of the most promising AAbs at Arizona State.

Validate Biomarkers for the Early Detection of Ovarian Cancer

Participants:

Steven Skates	Massachusetts General Hospital
Daniel Chan	Johns Hopkins University
Zhen Zhang	Johns Hopkins University
Karin Rodland	Pacific Northwest National Laboratory
Charles Drescher	Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center
Lori Sokol	Johns Hopkins University

This study considered 165 candidate protein markers that had already been identified in previous EDRN research or in the literature for inclusion in a validation study. These were triaged through bioinformatic filters and Accurate Inclusion Mass Screening to identify the top 50 candidates.

Aim 1: Detect 50 candidate protein biomarkers on serum samples from patients with high-grade serous ovarian cancer (HGSOC) (n=50) or benign serous conditions (n=50) using standard LC-SRM and PRISM-SRM.

Status: Eight candidates were selected based on sensitivity at 98% specificity and have been converted to antibody-based assays.

Aim 2: Change the immunoassay platform to the Meso Scale Discovery (MSD) and perform the assays on 200 specimens (100 HGSOC cases:100 benign controls) received from Fred Hutchinson Cancer Reserch Center.

Status: The JHU-BRL has developed high throughput low CV MSD assays to the eight protein candidates selected in Aim 1 with optimization of antibody pairs, dilution, buffers, and multiplexing in three multiplex panels with serum proteins with similar dynamic abundance ranges grouped into the same plex. Assays of the 8 candidate protein biomarkers have been completed and the analysis of the assay data is currently in progress.

tdNA in Uterine Lavage and Serum Proteins for Early Detection of Ovarian Cancer

Participants:

This project is led by Steven Skates, Massachusetts General Hospital.

Other participants:

Amy Bregar	Massachusetts General Hospital,
Charles Drescher	Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center
Michael Birrer	University of Arkansas Medical Sciences
Kristin Zorn	University of Arkansas Medical Sciences
Christine Garcia	Kaiser Permanente San Francisco
Bethan Powel	Kaiser-Permanente San Francisco
Robert Bast	MD Anderson Cancer Center
Karen Lu	MD Anderson Cancer Center
Ie-Ming Shih	Johns Hopkins University
Rebecca Stone	Johns Hopkins University
Zhen Zhang	Johns Hopkins University
Daniel Chan	Johns Hopkins University
Jesse Salk	TwinStrand Biosciences
Rosana Risques	University of Washington
Paul Speiser	University of Vienna, Austria
Lucy Gilbert	McGill University, Montreal, Canada
Monica Jones	Ann Arundel Medical Center
Yingqi Zhao	Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center

Aim: The relative contributions to detection of epithelial ovarian cancer (EOC) from tumor (t)DNA in uterine lavage (UL) and protein biomarkers from blood using newly available sample collection and high-resolution, NextGen Sequencing detection technologies:

- Duplex sequencing of *TP53* mutations
- McGill Haloplex sequencing of a 23-gene panel
- Serum ovarian cancer proteins tested at MDACC and JHU

Prospective enrollment of 200 women at normal risk with suspected ovarian cancer and 50 women with an inherited *BRCA1* or *BRCA2* deleterious mutation without suspected ovarian cancer who are scheduled for risk-reducing salpingo-oophorectomy. Clinical protocol has been approved with the DMCC designated as the sIRB site of record.

Status:

Currently the recruitment site at Swedish Hospital has been activated and has accrued 13 subjects to date. Although delays have occurred due to single IRB requirements and a lengthy process followed by COVID-19 related shutdowns, three other recruiting sites (Ann Arundel, KP-SF, JHU) have been IRB-approved, with the remaining two recruiting sites soon to follow, and patient accrual at these sites is imminent to begin.

EDRN Pilot Targeted Identification and Collection of Serous Tubal Intraepithelial Carcinoma (STIC) with a Falloposcope

Participants:

Ie-Ming Shih	Johns Hopkins University
Jennifer K. Barton	University of Arizona
Anna Beavis	Johns Hopkins University

This project aims to develop and provide pilot assessment of the falloposcope as an instrument to identify and sample areas of interest in the fallopian tube for detection of serous tubal intraepithelial carcinoma (STIC), a precursor lesion for high-grade serous carcinoma (HGSC) of the ovary.

Aim 1: Develop fluorescence probes to help visualize STICs in fallopian tubes.

Aim 2: Demonstrate *ex vivo* the feasibility of the falloposcope to detect STIC cells in human samples.

Aim 3: Validate if the sampled lesion cells are derived from STIC lesions.

Project 1: Develop and deliver Falloposcope and related documentation.

- Completed the design, building, and testing of 12 cell-acquiring fallopian tube endoscopes (falloposcopes) with console. Each 0.8 mm diameter falloposcope includes multispectral fluorescence and reflectance imaging and a small wire to collect cells.
- The falloposcope system was shipped to JHU; U. Arizona investigators travelled there to assemble and confirm functionality.
- Initial falloposcope images were obtained with mouse tissue and *ex vivo* human fallopian tube surgical discard tissue.
- A user manual for the falloposcope system was written.

Project 2: Develop protocol for cell collection and target staining and experimental contrast agent for *in situ* STIC visualization.

- A protocol for cell collection, dissociation, and affixing on a slide was developed.
- Several laminin C1 antibodies have been tested on cell cultures using immunofluorescence and the best one was selected.
- A large quantity of this antibody was produced and purified, and the antibody has been outsourced for Cy5.5 fluorophore conjugation.
- As a backup strategy, genome-wide methylation beads array was employed to identify other candidate STIC and EOC biomarkers.
- IGFBP2 was identified as a potential protein that is specifically expressed by STIC and ovarian cancer cells. This marker may be combined with laminin C1 for the falloposcope in the future.

Building Scientific Resources

In addition to supporting EDRN Collaborative Group research projects (described above), EDRN core and set-aside funds are used to support biospecimen collections and image repositories from multiple centers (both EDRN and non-EDRN) to be used for future biomarker verification and validation and to develop imaging methods to improve early detection. Following are summaries of these resource projects, including the participating organizations and scientists and the project aims and status.

- Pancreatic Cystic Fluid Reference Set
- Imaging Repository for Pre-Diagnostic and Early Stage Pancreatic Cancers
- A Prospective Study to Establish a New Onset Diabetes (NOD) Cohort
- Hepatocellular Carcinoma Early Detection Study (HEDS)
- Prostate Active Surveillance Study (PASS)
- EDRN Prostate Cancer Tissue Upgrading
- Upgrading Reference Set Phase II
- Breast Cancer Biospecimens and Imaging Reference Set

Pancreatic Cystic Fluid Reference Set

Participants:

This project is being led by Randall Brand, University of Pittsburgh.

Other participants:

Peter Allen	Duke University
Darwin Conwell	Ohio State University
Christopher DiMaio	Mt Sinai Medical Center
Kim Kirkwood	University of California San Francisco
Richard Kwon	University of Michigan
Anne Marie Lennon	Johns Hopkins University
Anirban Maitra	MD Anderson Cancer Center
Nipun Merchant	Vanderbilt University
Walter Park	Stanford University
Shailender Singh	University of Nebraska Medical Center
Jill Smith	Georgetown University
Shivakumar Vignesh	Moffitt Cancer Center
Jordan Winter	Thomas Jefferson University

The objective is to create a reference set consisting of well-characterized cystic fluid and serum/plasma specimens obtained from patients referred to participating academic centers with pancreatic cysts who meet consensus guidelines for consideration of surgical resection. The

primary goal of this reference set is to provide a resource for the development and evaluation of biomarkers for predicting the malignant potential of pancreatic cystic lesions that can be incorporated into clinical management strategies, initially focused on determining who would most benefit for surgical resection.

Status: Recruitment goal: 450 participants (prospective)
Current Enrollment: 435

Imaging Repository for Pre-Diagnostic and Early Stage Pancreatic Cancers

Participants:

Randall Brand	University of Pittsburgh
Ajay Goel	City of Hope
Natalia Khalaf	Baylor College of Medicine
Eugene Koay	MD Anderson Cancer Center
Anirban Maitra	MD Anderson Cancer Center
Walter Park	Stanford University
Michael Rosenthal,	Dana-Farber Cancer Institute
Aatur Singhi,	University of Pittsburgh
Dan Von Hoff	City of Hope
Brian Wolpin	Dana-Farber Cancer Institute
Bechien Wu	Kaiser Permanente Southern California

The goal of the project is to build a multi-institutional imaging repository for pre-diagnostic and early stage pancreatic cancer cases. The repository will be the first of its kind for pancreatic cancer, and will be used to develop specific quantitative imaging tools, which can be applied to validate imaging-based biomarker signals that have shown promise for early detection purposes, as well as image processing methods to improve detection of small pancreatic lesions. The imaging repository will be hosted by NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL) and a Joint Steering Committee will be established to provide oversight of the project and its scientific direction. The repository will initially be accessible by those who contribute cases with annotation from the participating institutions.

Aim 1. Establish a multi-institutional imaging repository for pre-diagnostic and early pancreatic cancer cases with clinical annotation.

Aim 2. Validate quantitative imaging tools for early detection of pancreatic cancer.

Status: 300 cases have been sent from participating sites to MD Anderson Cancer Center prior to transfer to JPL. Image analyses ongoing: (1) Determining the correlation of growth rate parameters with changes in body compartment. (2) Validation of the association of growth rates

with high/low delta in multi-institutional repository.

A Prospective Study to Establish a New Onset Diabetes (NOD) Cohort

Participants:

This project is being led by Suresh Chari and Anirban Maitra, M D Anderson Cancer Center.

Other participants:

David Bradley	The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center
Randall Brand,	University of Pittsburgh
Ziding Feng	Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center
William Fisher	Baylor College of Medicine
Evan Fogel	Indiana University
Steven Hughes	University of Florida
Lynn Matrisian	Pancreatic Cancer Action Network
Stephen Pandol	Cedars Sinai Medical Center
Walter Park	Stanford University
Philip Stella	St. Joseph Mercy Health System
Stephen van den Eeden	Kaiser Permanente Northern California
Bechien Wu	Kaiser Permanente Southern California

Approximately 0.85% of patients with adult onset diabetes will be diagnosed with pancreatic ductal adenocarcinoma (PDAC) within three years of developing diabetes. This type of diabetes (type 3C) is caused by the cancer but these patients are otherwise asymptomatic. The NOD study will recruit 10,000 subjects over the age of 50 years with new-onset diabetes to i) collect clinically annotated biospecimens from pre-symptomatic PDAC subjects and type 2 Diabetes Mellitus controls, ii) estimate the probability of PDAC in the prospectively assembled NOD cohort, and iii) establish a specimen reference set to validate emerging tests to identify high risk NOD patients for PDAC diagnostic workup.

Status: Recruitment Goal: 10,000

Current Recruitment: 445

Three NOD patients have been diagnosed with cancer (as of July 2020).

Hepatocellular Carcinoma Early Detection Study (HEDS)

Participants:

This project is led by Jorge Marrero, UT Southwestern Medical Center.

Other participants

Alex Befeler	Saint Louis University
Ziding Feng	Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center
Denise Harnois	Mayo Clinic Jacksonville
Mindie Nguyen	Stanford University
Neehar Parikh	University of Michigan,
Rajende Reddy	University of Pennsylvania
Lewis Roberts	Mayo Clinic
Myron Schwartz	Mount Sinai Hospital

Patients with cirrhosis will be followed for a minimum of 24 months and have biospecimens collected every 6 months. Data will be collected every 6 months: ultrasound, AFP, liver function tests, complete blood counts, MELD scores and any changes in medical history, personal cancer history and family cancer history.

Aim 1: Determine the incidence rate and the performance of ultrasound, and the biomarkers, alpha-fetoprotein (AFP), AFP-L3%, des-gamma carboxy-prothrombin (DCP) and novel biomarkers in detecting preclinical hepatocellular carcinoma (HCC).

Aim2: Establish a biorepository of longitudinally collected biospecimens from this cohort of cirrhotic patients.

Status: Recruitment Goal: 1550 participants (prospective).

Current Recruitment: 1562

87 participants have developed HCC.

Prostate Active Surveillance Study (PASS)

The EDRN formed a partnership with the Canary Foundation to provide coordination and data management for the Prostate Active Surveillance Study (PASS). PASS was launched in 2008 in response to the growing evidence of overtreatment of prostate cancer and a need for tools to tell the difference between aggressive and indolent prostate cancer. PASS is a multi-center study that has enrolled men with early-stage prostate cancer who elected to manage their cancer by being actively monitored.

Participants:

There are 10 clinical sites enrolling patients across the U.S. and Canada in addition to the coordinating center based at the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center. (The EDRN currently supports the coordinating center):

University of Washington
Veterans Affairs Puget Sound Health Care System
University of California in San Francisco
Stanford University – Stanford, California
Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center
Eastern Virginia Medical School
University of Michigan
Emory University
University of Texas Health Science Center in San Antonio
University of British Columbia

Status:

There are 2002 participants enrolled in PASS, with a median of 5.8 years of follow-up. There are 657 grade reclassifications. More than 16,000 specimens have been used in studies evaluating biomarkers of aggressive prostate cancer. More than fifteen papers have been published (e.g., [Performance of PCA3 and TMPRSS2:ERG urinary biomarkers in prediction of biopsy outcome in the Canary Prostate Active Surveillance Study \(PASS\). *Prostate Cancer Prostatic Dis.* 2019 Jan 21; PMID: 30664734; PMCID: PMC6642858\).](#)

EDRN Prostate Cancer Tissue Upgrading

Participants:

This project is led by Robin Leach, UT Health San Antonio and Martin Sanda, Emory University. Other participants:

Ian Thompson,	University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio
John Semmes,	Eastern Virginia Medical School
Frances Martin	Eastern Virginia Medical School
Daniel Lin	University of Washington
James Brooks	Stanford University Medical Center
John Wei	University of Michigan School of Medicine
Dan Mercola	University of California Irvine
Jaime Landman	University of California Irvine
Eric Klein	Cleveland Clinic
Dipen Parekh	University of Miami Miller School of Medicine
Ashutosh Tewari	Icahn School of Medicine at Mt. Sinai
Juan Miguel Mosquera	Weill Cornell Medicine
Ziding Feng	Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research

The majority of men with low-risk prostate cancer are currently being managed on active surveillance. Many of these men ultimately elect to undergo therapy because of concerns that they have more aggressive disease than detected by their biopsy. The lack of a robust biomarker to

predict presence of aggressive prostate cancer in this clinical setting contributes to the ongoing over-treatment of low-grade localized prostate cancer. To assist in counseling these men, the EDNRN GU working group began gathering a cohort of men with low-grade disease (defined as Gleason 6, ISUP Grade Group I), who ultimately chose to have a prostatectomy. Although the risk of metastasis is extremely low in patients with Gleason score 6 prostate cancers, a significant number of the cancers in these low-risk patients are subject to upgrading after radical prostatectomy (30-50%). Upgrading alone is a negative prognostic factor.

The goal was to identify pre-therapeutic biomarkers (urine, serum and tissue) that could predict upgrading, i.e., detection of high-grade disease in the surgical specimen that had not been detected in diagnostic biopsies. These biological samples comprise the Upgrading Reference Set (URS), and have been gathered using EDNRN core funds.

Aim: Prospectively accrue 340 men with Gleason score 6 who subsequently underwent radical prostatectomy.

Status:

Enrollment is nearly complete.

Upgrading Reference Set (phase 2)

Participants:

Robin Leach	University of Texas San Antonio
Paul C. Boutros	University of California Los Angeles

The goal of this project is to improve the identification of men at risk of upgrading their prostate cancer so that curative interventions can be more specifically directed, while avoiding over-treatment of indolent disease.

A series of recent studies has identified associations between the germline genome and clinical features of prostate cancers. The PRACTICAL consortium has identified a 149-variant polygenic risk-score (PRS) that distinguishes a group of men with ~5-fold increased lifetime risk of diagnosis, and another group with ~5-fold decreased lifetime risk (Schumacher et al., 2018). A subset of these have been shown to be associated with increased risk of diagnosis with aggressive disease and with earlier age of diagnosis in a cohort of 6,411 men (1,583 with prostate cancer, 632 of which had aggressive disease) (Seibert et al., 2019). A subset of these have been shown to be univariately associated with outcome in prostate-cancer specific mortality in a cohort of 12,082 patients (1,544 of whom died of prostate cancer) (FitzGerald et al., 2018). Similarly, studies of DNA Damage Repair (DDR) genes such as *BRCA2* and *ATM* have shown that rare-but-damaging

germline (constitutive) polymorphisms are enriched in advanced disease and associated with unique somatic phenotypes.

These studies, along with the rapidly declining costs of DNA sequencing, suggest that, in the near future, germline characterization will be standard-of-care for all newly diagnosed prostate cancers. Indeed, NCCN guidelines now indicate germline testing for all locally-advanced and metastatic patients, in part triggering cascade testing. The utility of germline variants in predicting upgrading from Active Surveillance is not fully clear, but it is likely that future biomarkers – including radiologic ones – will be combined into nomograms or other risk strategies with germline features. We therefore proposed to fully interrogate the germline genome of the URS by whole-genome sequencing to ~60x coverage. This high-depth sequencing will allow testing of the PRS existing germline markers and provide the raw data to allow any future marker to be tested with no analytical costs. It would also provide a heads-up comparator for future non-invasive biomarker studies on this cohort and enrich its overall value. Given this clinical and biomarker context, the goals in the current proposal are two-fold:

Aim 1: Collect tissue, blood, and urine specimens to obtain 195 complete specimen sets under the Upgrading Reference Set (URS) protocol.

Aim 2: Perform Germline whole-genome sequencing for each subject in the cohort to validate the PRS markers with respect to upgrading as previously reported.

The second aim not only serves to validate PRS but will create a resource for all future studies including enabling low-cost validation of any further germline-based risk markers. Through these supplement funds, investigators will be well-positioned to perform numerous validation studies using markers from both the BDL as well as other investigators.

Status:

To date, 375 men have been enrolled. Specimens from these men were then subjected to pre-defined exclusion criteria, including sufficient sample collection processed as required by the SOPs, confirmed Gleason 6 disease on central review of biopsy, and ability to locate previous biopsy material. In addition, some men elected to seek other treatments (e.g. radiotherapy or focal treatment) and therefore were excluded from the study. Of the 375 enrolled men, 316 reached Round 1 (i.e., needed biological specimens were obtained), and of these, 255 have had central pathology review.

Breast Cancer Biospecimens and Imaging Reference Set

Participants:

This project is led by Jeffrey Marks, Duke University.

Other participants:

Cha-Mei Tang

Creatv MicroTech Inc.

John Heine

H. Lee Moffitt Cancer Center and Research Institute Inc.

The goal of this project is the development of a retrospective cohort of 1050 full-field digital mammography images and a prospective cohort of 1050 digital breast tomosynthesis images together with blood samples obtained prior to definitive diagnosis from women referred to diagnostic radiology based on an initial BI-RADS 4 suspicious mammogram. Circulating biomarkers combined with imaging features could allow the development of classification algorithms that can confidently rule out the presence of malignancy in this population without biopsy.

Aim 1: Assemble a well-characterized retrospective set of blood specimens and Full-Field Digital Mammography images to test biomarkers that, in conjunction with mammography image features, can detect and discriminate breast cancer.

Status: Recruitment goal: 1050 participants

Recruitment: complete

Aim 2: Assemble a well-characterized, prospectively collected set of blood specimens and Digital Breast Tomosynthesis images from women designated as BI-RADS 4. Specimen set will be used to test combinations of image features and blood biomarkers for more accurate discrimination of benign versus cancer (*in situ* or invasive) and thereby reduce the number of negative biopsies.

Status: Recruitment goal is 1050 participants (prospective).

Recruitment as of June 2020: 840

The Duke BDL and the Moffitt CVC, together with the Informatics Center at Jet Propulsion Laboratory and the EDRN DMCC, are prospectively acquiring images from 3D-Mammography (tomosynthesis) together with freshly collected serum and plasma to develop a prospective cohort of 1050 individuals with same clinical characteristics. Fresh blood is shipped to Creatv Microtech in real time for rare Cancer Associated Macrophage-Like (CAML) cell assessment. About 840 subjects have been accrued (prior to COVID-19 related shut-down), undergoing breast biopsy triggered by a BI-RADS 4 finding. To date, greater than 80% of these subjects received a benign tissue diagnosis mirroring the false positive rate in this mammographic category.

Conclusion

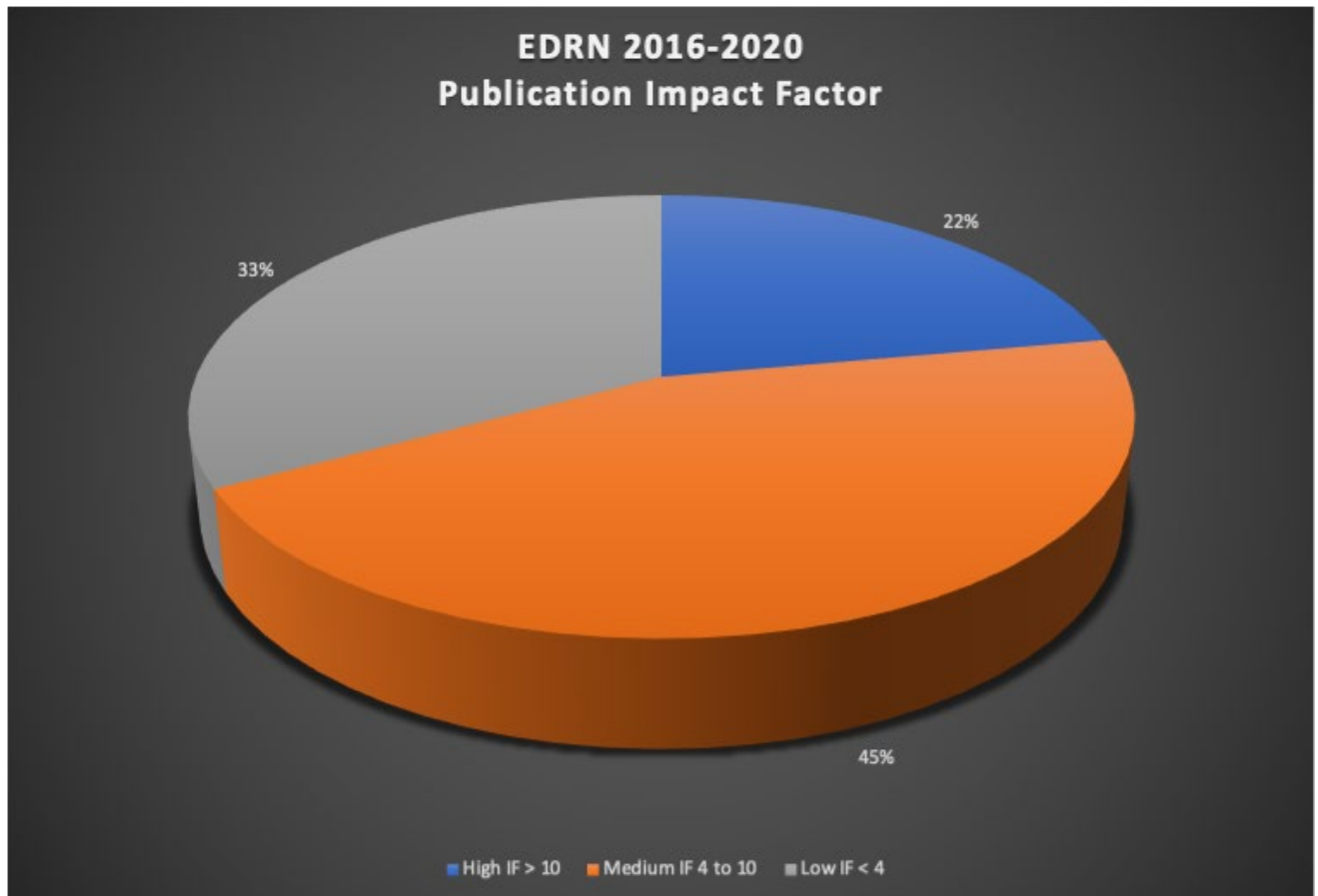
The EDRN structure has fostered a culture of Team Science that has built a strong bond of collaboration and leadership across the network. Most EDRN biomarker developmental and validation research is supported by the individual PI's cooperative agreement and EDRN PIs have the primary responsibility for the conduct of this research. However, a major advantage of a network like the EDRN and its Team Science approach becomes apparent when the investigators meet to discuss their work and establish collaborative projects. Presentation of their recent research results to other EDRN PIs during Collaborative Group and Steering Committee meetings provides them feedback on their ongoing research, allowing adjustments in light of peer input and progress being made by other EDRN PIs. EDRN awards include set-aside funds that can only be used for new team and collaborative projects that take advantage of the expertise, resources, and platforms of several different PIs.

While the organization of the EDRN provides a sound foundation for this high degree of collaboration, its success would not have been possible without the enlightened leadership of NCI program staff, the Chairs and Co-Chairs of the EDRN Executive Committee, and the members of working groups and consulting teams that have provided advice to the EDRN over the years. The vision of NCI leadership to establish such an organization should be congratulated, and this type of structure should be seriously considered for as a model for future large-scale enterprises that require a host of specialties, organizations, and institutions to achieve 'Big Science' discoveries.

The AACR-NCI Think Tank Charting the Future of Cancer Prevention noted in 2008 that "The EDRN should be tapped as a potential partner in the effort to develop response biomarkers. Efficient translational research in prevention requires that trials enroll primarily individuals at high risk. This is another way to take advantage of the EDRN success. The goal of better risk assessment entails research on targets and pathways of the early stages of pre-cancer. Promising agents tested in high-risk individuals for short periods of time can build momentum for some of the needed reforms." The Committee further stated that "Without the EDRN, research into new biomarkers of early cancer detection and risk would have remained on the periphery of research with a strong, but fragmented laboratory presence and little translational interest in the academic scientific community. But with the Network, a new translational paradigm has defined the organization, approaches, and standards by which biomarkers are being developed and assessed. The Network created major focus, energy and new research in the field of early detection. The Network's publications, meetings, funding opportunities and infrastructure have fashioned a new environment for cancer prevention research." AACR is publishing a special issue on the 20th anniversary of EDRN in *Cancer Epidemiology, Biomarkers and Prevention*, October 2020.

EDRN Publications

Since its inception, EDRN investigators have published more than 3400 articles; 11% in journals with impact factors greater than 10. From 2016-2020, EDRN investigators published more than 555 articles; 22% in journals with impact factors greater than 10. A list of articles published from 2016-2020 is given below, organized by EDRN component.



List of Publications (2016 – 2020)

1. Alemozaffar M, Akintayo AA, Abiodun-Ojo OA, Patil D, Saeed F, Huang Y, Osunkoya AO, Goodman MM, Sanda M, Schuster DM. Fluciclovine PET/CT for Preoperative Staging in Patients with Intermediate to High-Risk Primary Prostate Cancer. *J Urol*. 2020 Apr 29:101097 JU0000000000001095. Epub ahead of print. PMID: 32347780.
2. Liss MA, Newcomb LF, Zheng Y, Garcia MP, Filson CP, Boyer H, et al. Magnetic Resonance Imaging for the Detection of High-Grade Cancer in the Canary Prostate Active Surveillance Study. *J Urol*. 2020 Apr 28:101097 JU0000000000001088. Epub ahead of print. PMID: 32343189.
3. Jansen CS, Prokhnevskaya N, Master VA, Sanda MG, Carlisle JW, Bilen MA, et al. An intra-tumoral niche maintains and differentiates stem-like CD8 T cells. *Nature*. 2019 Dec; 576(7787): 465-470. doi: 10.1038/s41586-019-1836-5. Epub 2019 Dec 11. PMID: 31827286; PMCID: PMC7108171.
4. Schenk JM, Newcomb LF, Zheng Y, Faino AV, Zhu K, Nyame YA, et al. African American Race is Not Associated with Risk of Reclassification during Active Surveillance: Results from the Canary Prostate Cancer Active Surveillance Study. *J Urol*. 2020 Apr;203(4):727-733. Epub 2019 Oct 25. PMID: 31651227.
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9. O'Reilly E, Tuzova AV, Walsh AL, Russell NM, O'Brien O, Kelly S, et al. epiCaPtire: A Urine DNA Methylation Test for Early Detection of Aggressive Prostate Cancer. *JCO Precis Oncol*. 2019;2019:10.1200/PO.18.00134. doi: 10.1200/PO.18.00134. Epub 2019 Jan 14. PMID: 30801051; PMCID: PMC6383793.
10. Liu W, Patil D, Howard DH, Moore RH, Wang H, Sanda MG, Filson CP. Impact of prebiopsy magnetic resonance imaging of the prostate on cancer detection and treatment patterns. *Urol Oncol*. 2019 Mar;37(3):181.e15-181.e21. doi: 10.1016/j.urolonc.2018.11.004. Epub 2018 Dec 1. PMID: 30514604.
11. Van der Kwast TH, Helleman J, Nieboer D, Bruinsma SM, Roobol MJ; et al. Consistent Biopsy Quality and Gleason Grading Within the Global Active Surveillance Global Action Plan 3 Initiative: A Prerequisite for Future Studies. *Eur Urol Oncol*. 2019 May;2(3):333-336. doi: 10.1016/j.euo.2018.08.017. Epub 2018 Sep 13. PMID: 31200849.

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