

# Ovarian cancer researchers find biomarker linked to prognosis in aggressive disease type

7 March 2017



Dr. Mauricio Medrano, a molecular biologist and research associate at Princess Margaret Cancer Centre, University Health Network. Credit: UHN

Ovarian cancer researchers have identified a protein biomarker expressed on the surface of tumour cells in high-grade serous ovarian cancer, the most common and lethal subtype of the disease.

The findings, featured on the cover of the March 7 issue of *Cell Reports*, show that patients with high levels of the biomarker, CD151, have a poor prognosis, says lead author Mauricio Medrano, a molecular biologist and research associate at Princess Margaret Cancer Centre, University Health Network.

"Ovarian cancer is many diseases," says Dr. Medrano. "By identifying CD151 and its underlying role in cancer cell survival, we hope to develop a therapy to target it. As a marker for poor prognosis, with further research, there is the potential to develop a clinical screening tool to help personalize cancer treatment for patients."

The research was led by principal investigator Dr. Robert Rottapel, senior scientist and Professor, Departments of Medical Biophysics and Immunology, University of Toronto.?

In lab experiments, the research team used cell lines derived from 40 patient tumour samples to identify that CD151 contributes to the survival of cells of high-grade serous ovarian cancer origin. The team further analysed tissue samples from a cohort of approximately 1,000 patients to establish the correlation of high levels of CD151 to [poor prognosis](#).

"For the scientific community," says Dr. Medrano, "our study provides a lot of new information about other possible targets, not only CD151, that could be important and can provide new ideas for how to target [ovarian cancer](#)."

Provided by University Health Network

APA citation: Ovarian cancer researchers find biomarker linked to prognosis in aggressive disease type (2017, March 7) retrieved 11 September 2022 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2017-03-ovarian-cancer-biomarker-linked-prognosis.html>

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