New saliva oral and throat cancer diagnosis test receives FDA approval

May 7 2021, by Rose Trapnell

Credit: Queensland University of Technology

A QUT researcher's identification of saliva as an early detection liquid biopsy for oral and throat cancer has been realized by the development and commercialisation of a diagnostic device by US-based biotech company Viome.

Viome's early detection device has been designated a Breakthrough

Device by The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) in the US.

QUT Associate Professor Chamindie Punyadeera has spent a decade researching the possibility of saliva being the optimum diagnostic liquid for the early detection of oral and throat cancer.

Professor Punyadeera was driven to this field of research after her young brother-in-law passed away within six months of being diagnosed with oral cancer.

Her systematic collection of saliva samples from oral and throat cancer patients, establishment of saliva collection and optimisation protocols, identification of a key unmet-clinical need and work with clinicians provided the foundations for the commercialisation of the new device.

"This test could save many lives because until now early-stage oral cancer has been hard to detect because effective diagnostic tools have not been available," Professor Punyadeera said.

"This has led to late diagnosis, a poor prognosis and low survival rates."

Professor Punyadeera said the risk of oral cancer increased with age and increased more rapidly after the age of 50.

"The salivary metatranscriptome as an accurate diagnostic indicator of oral cancer" has been accepted for publication in *npj Genomic Medicine*.

More information: Guruduth Banavar et al. The salivary metatranscriptome as an accurate diagnostic indicator of oral cancer, (2020). DOI: 10.21203/rs.3.rs-55052/v1

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