# Swedish research behind unique cancer test for pets

Cancer is just as common in companion animals as in humans. Cancer therapy is improving and in many cases the disease can be treated with success. However early diagnosis is crucial for successful treatment. Therefore, a new, unique cancer test can come to be of great significance.

The test, which is being developed by the novel Swedish biotech company Alertix Veterinary Diagnostics, is based on long-standing research at The Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, SLU, in Uppsala, Sweden.

– We have developed a unique method for detecting the enzyme thymidine kinase (TK1) in blood serum. The enzyme is a biomarker of tumor growth, which characterizes cancer, says Alertix’ head of research Staffan Eriksson.

**Also detects solid tumors**

What makes the method unique is that it measures the presence of the enzyme with antibodies. Due to that it can be used for detecting not only different types of blood cancers, which the existing TK1 assays do, but also solid tumors. No other method can accomplish that.

– A simple blood sample is all it takes. If the analysis shows an elevated TK1 value there are strong reasons to suspect tumor growth. The enzyme is released into the bloodstream at an early stage – even before the patient show clinical symptoms. Therefore, it can be of great importance for early detection of cancer, says Staffan Eriksson.

**Test for dogs in 2019**

The development of a test for dogs is now in the final phase. The plan is to make it available for veterinary clinics and laboratories in Sweden and Scandinavia in the beginning of 2019. The next step will be to introduce tests for cats and horses.

**Many areas of use**

– The test will offer a powerful tool for early diagnosis, but also for monitoring cancer treatment in veterinary care - simply by determining if the animal reacts to the treatment. We also think that there might be strong reasons to use the test for screening animals over a certain age. That means to offer tests to all dogs over, let’s say, eight years of age. Because exactly as in humans the risk of cancer increases with age, says Henrik Rönnberg, veterinary oncologist at The University Animal Hospital in Uppsala.

**International homepage**

Today Alertix’ international homepage, alertixvet.com is launched. Here you can find further information about the test, the research and about cancer diseases in companion animals.

Alertix Veterinary Diagnostics is located in Kalmar, Sweden. The research is conducted in Uppsala.

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