

CIRCULATING TUMOR CELL TEST ORDERING

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Disclaimer: Please recognize that I am not a Medical Doctor. I have been an avid student researching and studying prostate cancer as a survivor and continuing patient since 1992. I have dedicated my retirement years to continued research and study in order to serve as an advocate for prostate cancer awareness, and, from a activist patient's viewpoint, to help patients, caregivers, and others interested develop an understanding of prostate cancer, its treatment options, and the treatment of the side effects that often accompany treatment. Readers of this paper must understand that the comments or recommendations I make are not intended to be the procedure to blindly follow; rather, they are to be reviewed as my opinion, then used for further personal research, study, and subsequent discussion with the medical professional/physician providing prostate cancer care.

In the event any of you are unaware, the Circulating Tumor Cell (CTC) test is now covered by Medicare. Important is to know how to go about getting the test appropriately ordered by your physician, since many physicians have no idea how to order the test. The CTC test is more often used to determine circulating tumor cell levels in the blood stream of patients already experiencing more advanced disease or metastases.

It would appear that with a blood draw to test for the presence of Circulating Tumor Cells (CTC) in one's bloodstream, that the lab request also include checking for the presence of an androgen receptor variant known as AR-V7. This is important prior to beginning Xtandi/enzalutamide or Zytiga/abiraterone acetate since should this variant be present it has been found that these medications will less likely be effective. See <http://www.ascopost.com/ViewNews.aspx?nid=20590> wherein should this AR-V7 variant be present, the medication Galeterone could be prescribed since Galeterone remains effective despite the presence of this variant.

I suggest it prudent that if a CTC test is planned that your physician's staff first call Medicare to clear coverage for this test. For men on Medicare, the clinics need only to phone 1-800-Medicare (1-800-633-4227) and ask for the 'Provider's Phone Line.' The clinic should keep this important Phone Line for using proper codes of any and all prostate cancer testing. Though the codes for the CTC test are provided below, it would still be prudent to make sure these continue to be the appropriate codes. Provide this information to the oncology medical staff suggesting they keep the Medicare phone number for future use on obtaining Medicare coverage for

prostate cancer serum testing. This is not a phone number for patient use; its use is only for physicians or their staff.

If your oncologist runs into any problem getting Medicare to pay for the \$1,000 'Veridex CellSearch CTC' blood tests by Quest Labs [CPT #86152 and #86153], advise them to have their clinic use the proper Medicare diagnostic codes of "185 and 196.6." These codes assure reimbursement.

Again, for the CTC test, the proper Medicare diagnostic code is 185 and 196.6. The proper blood test number is 16812 and the proper CPT [Current procedural Technology] codes [2 of them] for the CTC is #86152 and #86153.

Reference information:

<https://www.cellsearchctc.com/clinical-applications>

<http://www.questdiagnostics.com/testcenter/TestDetail.action?ntc=16812>.

<http://tinyurl.com/n2qskf6>