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"Method for Optical Detection of Pancreatic Cancer"

Mary-Ann Mycek, PhD, James Scheiman, MD, Barbara McKenna, MD, and Diane Simeone, MD
2009 funding: $100,000

Pancreatic adenocarcinoma has the worst prognosis of all malignancies and currently, no methods for early detection of pancreatic cancer exist. This translational research project seeks to fill the gap between a highly significant unmet clinical need and the promise of break-through technologies for the optical detection of disease in the pancreas.

Mycek and her colleagues are working to develop for the first time a method to detect pancreatic cancer using tissue optical spectroscopy. The method will consist of prototype optical biosensing technology (device hardware) coupled with diagnostic algorithms (analytical models for tissue classification).

The long-term goal of this research program is to deploy the technology during minimally-invasive endoscopic diagnostic procedures to test whether it will be capable of enabling early cancer detection in the pancreas by distinguishing malignant from inflammatory pancreatic mass lesions in situ or by guiding pancreatic tissue sampling via fine-needle aspiration.

Posted on December 8, 2009, 9:22 am