

A New Way to Assess the Chance of Gastrointestinal Tumor Recurrence

University of Colorado researchers find that ulcerations could determine the risk of tumor recurrence and influence cancer treatment.

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Researchers from the [University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus](#) have identified a new feature indicative of the chance of recurrence of Gastrointestinal Stromal Tumors (GISTs).

Clinicians currently rely on examining the prognostic features of location, size and mitotic activity in risk stratification of GISTs. In a study published January 9 in the [Journal of Surgical Research](#), researchers identify mucosal ulcerations as a potential fourth feature that could play an important role in indicating the chance of recurrence.

“Our findings indicate that ulceration is an independent predictor of the three known features experts use in risk stratification of GISTs,” says [Martin McCarter](#), MD, corresponding author and member of the [CU Cancer Center](#). “This finding is significant because it’s new information that might change the future of treatment of this tumor.”

Researchers examined a database of patients diagnosed with GISTs and completed a chart review to determine occurrence rate of ulcerations in addition to the other pathological indicators. Of 310 patients with adequate data reviewed, 85 had mucosal ulceration with their GIST; in longer term follow-ups, in addition to mitotic rate and size, researchers found that patients with ulcerated GIST were more likely to experience disease progression.

“Determining the role ulcerations play in the risk of recurrence could have potential implications for adjuvant treatments,” says McCarter. “Future independent evaluations of our study could open doors to determining more tailored treatment plans by completing a more robust analysis of risk stratification.”

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