

The Galleri Cancer Test: Worth It for Early Detection or Not?

5 MIN READ

OCT. 23, 2025

BY DANN ALBRIGHT, CSCS

A blood test that claims to spot more than 50 types of cancer sounds like a game-changer, but does it really deliver?

The Galleri test and other multi-cancer early detection (MCED) tests promise to catch signs of many types of cancer before they become symptomatic. Including cancers that don't have recommended screening tests.

It sounds promising—but these tests aren't FDA approved and they can be quite expensive.

Most experts agree: These tests aren't a substitute for current cancer screenings, but may be helpful for people at high risk or hard-to-detect cancers.

Should you include Galleri or other MCED tests in your annual longevity tests? We consulted experts to find out.

What is the Galleri cancer test?

Galleri is an example of a multi-cancer early detection test, or MCED test. It “looks for DNA fragments shed by tumors into the bloodstream,” says Dr. Elizabeth Lumpkin, an anesthesiologist and expert medical content editor.

“It screens for signals associated with 50+ types of cancer,” she continues, “which is far beyond standard single-cancer screenings like mammograms or colonoscopies.”

That's what the companies marketing these tests emphasize: that they can pick up on signs of many different types of cancer, including cancers that we don't have other screening tests for.

You're probably already having screenings that would catch some types—like skin cancer checks, HPV tests, or PSA blood tests. An MCED test looks for a much wider variety of cancer signals than your typical doctor-recommended screenings.

But does the Galleri test work? The answer is complicated.

How well does the Galleri cancer test work?

Questions about MCED tests have been in the news a lot in recent months. Are they really the powerful tool their marketing materials claim? Have they been sufficiently tested? Should they replace other, more traditional cancer tests?

“They have very high specificity, meaning if the test is positive, it's usually meaningful,” adds Dr. Lumpkin, “but the sensitivity varies depending on the type and stage of cancer. The sensitivity is high for late-stage cancers but lower for early-stage cancers (which is when we most want to catch it).”

As the technology improves, however, that early-stage sensitivity may improve. Without a significant improvement in test results, though, MCEDs should only be used to supplement traditional tests.

“These types of tests are very promising but not yet reliable enough to replace standard screening,” says Dr. Lumpkin.

Dr. Amar Rewari, Chief of Radiation Oncology at **Luminis Health**, agrees: “It should be viewed as something that adds to, rather than replaces, the proven cancer

screening tools we already have.”

Should you get the Galleri cancer test?

Now, understanding that these tests aren’t FDA-approved and are still in early stages, should you run out to get a Galleri test or another MCED test?

According to Dr. Lumpkin, “the people who may benefit are those age 50 or older, those with a strong family history of multiple cancers, people with known genetic predispositions, and people with a history of smoking or other high-risk exposures.”

Lower-risk people — especially those who are younger, generally healthy, and without known genetic predispositions to cancer — are less likely to benefit from it. These tests invite more testing, plus the emotional impact of potential false positives.

Because the Galleri test isn’t covered by most insurance plans, you’ll also need to pay for it out of pocket. The test averages around \$1,000, but other MCEDs may vary in price.

It’s also worth noting that if you get a positive result, you’ll also need to pay for additional testing to confirm that you actually have a particular type of cancer.

In the end, whether you should undergo additional testing for cancer — like Galleri or another MCED test — depends on your risk factors. “People who are younger, low risk, or not prepared for the possibility of extra scans or biopsies if the test shows something may not benefit as much,” says Dr. Rewari.

Detection is good, but prevention is

invaluable

No matter your age, there are things you can do to boost your health and make the development of cancer less likely. You can **eat a balanced, varied diet**, for example. You can **exercise regularly**. Adopting strategies to **reduce chronic inflammation** will help, too.

A generally healthy lifestyle will help protect you from almost every disease—including cancer.

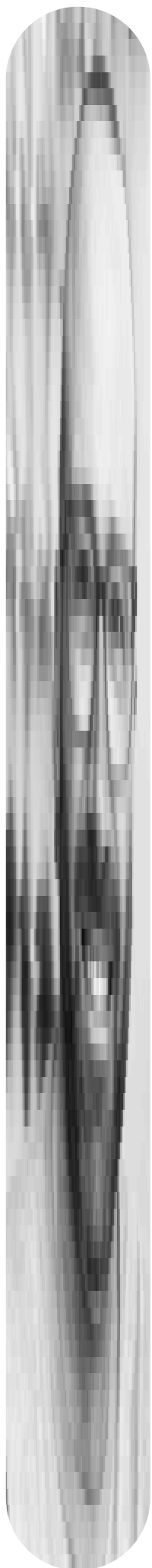
If you have specific risk factors, though, like a family history of cancer, high exposure to known carcinogens, or your age, an MCED test might be worth it if you can afford the cost.

That being said, a lifestyle that keeps you healthy, strong, and independent as you age will probably reduce the chances that you'll develop cancer in the future. The earlier you start an aging-friendly lifestyle, the better—but it's never too late to get started.

And you'll reap the disease-fighting benefits no matter when you start.

The information provided in this article is for educational and informational purposes only and is not intended as health, medical, or financial advice. Do not use this information to diagnose or treat any health condition. Always consult a qualified healthcare provider regarding any questions you may have about a medical condition or health objectives. **Read our disclaimers.**

WRITTEN BY:



Dann Albright, CSCS