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Diagnostic Effectiveness of Chromogranin A and Multigene Liquid Biopsy (NETest) in Neuroendocrine Neoplasia: An assessment of Monoanalyte and Multianalyte Biomarker Efficacy



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BACKGROUND: A significant limitation in NEN management remains the absence of a reliable universal biomarker. CgA is still used despite reservations regarding accuracy and clinical utility. Different CgA assays are used at CLIA-certified laboratories (USA) and NET Centres of Excellence (CoE) and results are reported in several guidelines (ENETS/NANETS) and reimbursed by insurance companies. We evaluated the NEOLISA (EuroDiagnostica, IBL-America, CLIA-certified) and DD-ELISA (Demeditec Diagnostics, Germany; ENETS CoE) and compared results to the NETest, a CLIA-certified NET diagnostic.

METHODS: 258 NENs: pancreatic, n=67; small intestine, n=40; appendiceal, n=10; rectal, n=45; duodenal, n=9; gastric, n=44; lung, n=43.

Image-positive disease (IPD) (n=123; 25 RECIST-progressive, 98 radiologically stable), image/histology-negative (IND) (n=106), and image-negative/histology-positive (n=29).

NEOLISA, ULN: 108ng/mL, DD: ULN: 99ng/mL. Data mean±SEM.

NETest: PCR assay, ULN:20.

All samples de-identified and assessed blinded.

Statistics: Mann-Whitney U-test, Pearson correlation & McNemar-test.

RESULTS: Overall: CgA was positive in 53 (NEOLISA), 32 (DD).

NEOLISA levels significantly ($p < 0.0001$) higher ($98.6 \pm 11 \text{ ng/mL}$) vs. the DD-assay ($76 \pm 8 \text{ ng/mL}$) ($n = 258$). Assay concordance: Pearson $r = 0.84$, $p < 0.0001$. 12% ($n = 32$) were discordant. NEOLISA detected more ($n = 23$, 15%) true-positives than DD.

IPD ($n = 123$): 41/123-CgA+ (33%, NEOLISA) vs. 23 (19%, DD). McNemar's $\text{Chi}^2 = 13.14$, $p = 0.0003$.

NETest-positive in 122/123 (99%; McNemar's $\text{Chi}^2 = 79.97$, $p < 0.0001$).

IND/histology-neg ($n = 106$): 12/106-CgA+ (11%, NEOLISA) vs. 9 (8%, DD; $p = \text{NS}$).

NETest-positive in 35/106 (33%).

IND-histology+ ($n = 29$): 9/29-CgA+ (7/9 GNETs, 2/20 RNETs NEOLISA) vs. 4/29 (4/9 GNETs DD).

NETest positive in 13 (9/9 GNETs, 4/20 RNETs)

Disease status (IPD):

No difference in CgA levels between progressive (PD: $n = 25$) and stable disease (SD: $n = 98$).

NETest significantly higher in PD (47 ± 5) than SD (29 ± 1), $p = 0.0009$.

CONCLUSION: NETest, a multigenomic mRNA biomarker is ~99% accurate for detecting NEN disease compared to two standard CgA assays. These detected NET disease in 19-33%. NETest should be considered as the standard of care.

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