

Spotting the (metabolic) differences to better understand and prevent breast cancer

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Several risk factors for breast cancer, the most common cancer in the world, have already been identified. These risk factors are of different types, often interrelated, such as lifestyle habits, or molecules in blood (hormones, inflammation markers). These molecules can be measured with some laboratory methods. Despite advances in our knowledge, however, most breast cancer cases are still not attributable to known risk factors. I will explain how we used a new laboratory methodology, called metabolomics, to identify potential new risk factors for breast cancer in blood.

This technique enables to detect and measure simultaneously hundreds of small molecules in a given biological sample. We used it to analyze blood samples from thousands of participants from our epidemiological studies who also provided information on their health and lifestyle during 25 years.

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