

Classification of rare lung cancers

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Traditionally cancer diagnoses have been made using histopathology techniques, whereby a pathologist examines pieces of tumour tissue under a microscope, observing physical features of the cells, or their 'histology'. However we now know that tumours which appear physically similar under a microscope can in fact behave very differently, for instance one tumour may grow faster than another. Often these behavioural changes are caused by differences in the activity of genes within the tumour, features that cannot be seen with a microscope. In the Rare Cancers Genomics team at IARC we are working to identify the invisible differences between physically similar tumours, with a particular focus on rare lung cancers, to improve the classification of such tumours.

Primary authors: SEXTON-OATES, Alexandra (IARC); Dr DI GENOVA, Alex; Dr ALCALA, Nicolas; Ms MANGIANTE, Lise; Dr FOLL, Matthieu; Dr FERNANDEZ CUESTA, Lynnette

Presenter: SEXTON-OATES, Alexandra (IARC)

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