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SIFT-MS technology drives simplification of bowel cancer screening

Syft Technologies Limited's SIFT-MS units are being used to make transformational differences in the detection of bowel and other gastro-intestinal cancers.

"Research by Imperial College London has identified a whole panel of biomarkers that are present in the breath of people who have cancer. Our technology can detect compounds in air to a parts-per-trillion level so has become a key component of the programme in a collaboration that also includes the University of Otago's Wellington School of Medicine and Callaghan Innovation" said Doug Hastie, Syft's Managing Director.

The biomarkers could identify cancer more accurately and earlier than current bowel screening tests and home kits.

The New Zealand trials are being started after the technology was successfully trialed over two years in the UK, seeing thousands of people being tested.

"This a completely non-invasive technique and, unlike current testing practices, requires no preparation on the part of the patient. The testing requires the patient to breathe into a mask and the attached bag collects the breath sample. The bag is sent to a centralised lab and the sample is analysed by a Syft SIFT-MS unit. In time the tests could be available at GP practices, helping to alleviate the stretched resources in colonoscopy bowel screening" said Mr Hastie.

Bowel cancer, also called colon, rectal or colorectal cancer, is the second highest cause of cancer death in New Zealand. Around 3000 New Zealanders are diagnosed with bowel cancer every year and more than 1,200 die from it. There may be no warning signs that bowel cancer is developing. A National Bowel Screening Programme (NBSP) is being rolled out for men and women aged 60 to 74.

"We are delighted to be working with our partners in this programme. Our technology has the capability to be used to identify other cancers in breath samples and we expect to collaborate with other research centres to progress these opportunities. Seeing the technology being used to support advances in the early detection of serious health conditions is very satisfying. Each SIFT-MS unit has the capacity to process many thousands of test results on a weekly basis. We expect that wider use of the technology will, in time, drive an increase in demand for units. However, realistically, to take this form of bowel cancer screening from a research trial to an every day medical test will take several years at least to be put through a considerable number of levels of clinical trial proof".

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About Syft

Syft Technologies Limited is a world leading provider of Selected Ion Flow Tube Mass Spectrometry (SIFT-MS) solutions. Revolutionizing the trace gas analysis world, Syft's instruments enable the rapid, targeted and comprehensive analysis of compounds in air to a parts-per-trillion level. Syft's technology is used in industries including energy, biomedical, automotive, environmental, consumer products, laboratory and research, security and air quality monitoring. Based in Christchurch, Syft trades on New Zealand's Unlisted Securities Exchange ([USX: SYE](https://www.usx.co.nz)). Further information is available at [syft.com](https://www.syft.com).