



# Promising Test For Cancer Patients Comes At A Cost

Friday October 20, 2006

Sarah Richter has suffered the pain of losing a daughter to breast cancer and now she, too, is battling the potentially deadly disease.

But Richter paid \$2,500 for a test that could increase her chances of survival.

She's about to become the first person in Canada to undergo an innovative test not covered by OHIP that can allow her doctors to ensure she gets the correct chemotherapy treatment.

The first round of the treatment nearly killed her.

The test involves doctors taking a sample of a cancer tumour. Those cells are then sent to a lab in the United States where experts test various drugs to find out which ones are successful at killing the cancer.

This test, called CS/CR Assay, is standard practice south of the border and Richter's doctor at the private clinic that offers Canadians the test, Medicor Cancer Centres, said he thinks the screen should be covered by OHIP.

"It would be a tremendous benefit to all cancer patients," Dr. Akbar Khan said.

Ontario Health Minister George Smitherman was unavailable for comment on the test Friday, but the government has said it's keeping a close eye on private clinics.

Faced with a fate similar to her daughter's, Richter felt like she didn't have much of a choice and said turning to a private provider was "all I could do."

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## What Is ChemoFit?

It's a lab test that lets experts identify the best chemotherapy to treat your tumour. The test is called CS/CR Assay, which involves doctors taking a sample of your tumour tissue to identify the drugs that will be the most effective in treating your cancer.

According to Medicor Cancer Centres, which provide the service at a cost, this test is commonly used for patients with solid tumours like lung, ovarian, breast, colon, prostate, cervical, endometrial and pancreatic cancers and sarcomas.

## How Do I Get It?

Unfortunately this test is only available to those who can afford it. It is not covered by OHIP and costs \$2,500. Medicor Cancer Centres perform the test.

For more information on this test and the services Medicor Cancer Centres provides, contact the medical facility at **416. 222. 0037**, or visit their website at [medicorcancer.com](http://medicorcancer.com).