



NEWS FROM THE WORLD OF MEDICINE

BREAST-CANCER UPDATE

I. Not for Prostates Only. A protein identical to prostate-specific antigen (PSA) – a biochemical marker of the prostate gland found in the blood and used to diagnose and monitor prostate cancer – was recently found in 30 percent of female breast tumours. According to a collaborative study done at Philadelphia's Jefferson Cancer Institute and the

University of Toronto, the presence of PSA may have applications for breast-cancer prognosis, the monitoring of therapy and the design of new treatments.

Preliminary evidence suggests that the expression of PSA is a positive prognostic indicator. "Breast tumours producing the protein have much better outcomes than tumours not producing it," says Dr. Eleftherios Diamandis, deputy chair of the University of Toronto's department of clinical biochemistry. "It's only when tumour cells lose their ability to produce PSA that they become more aggressive. Before long this protein may be measured in all breast tumours removed from cancer patients."

– Thomas Jefferson University/
Jefferson Medical College