

Banner MD Anderson Starts Tissue Bank to Better Study and Treat Cancer

GILBERT, Ariz. – Banner MD Anderson Cancer Center has started a tissue bank, in which medical experts are collecting and storing a variety of cancerous tissue samples to research the causes of cancer and better fight the disease.

Tissue banks, or biobanks, are facilities that collect, store and manage the use of biological samples for current and future research. Banner MD Anderson will use tumor specimens donated by patients to study the physiological and genetic properties of cancer.

“The only way we’re going to be able to find a cure for cancer is to find out what caused it,” said Matthew Callister, MD, interim medical director at Banner MD Anderson in Gilbert. “This tissue bank will allow us to better determine what causes cancer, so we can find new ways to treat it and prevent the disease.”

The Banner MD Anderson tissue bank is a collaborative project with The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center in Houston. It is the first of its kind for both institutions, due to the collaborative structure and all-encompassing approach to tissue collection. Tissue representing every type of cancer will be shared interchangeably by both organizations, allowing scientists to collaborate in making high-impact scientific discoveries.

Every new patient at the facility will be asked if they would like to donate tissue samples for the bank. They can opt in or out of donating residual tissues remaining from surgical or biopsy procedures.

“This broadens the scope of our knowledge about different kinds of cancer, and in a more collective manner,” said Dr. Callister.

As science and technologies are evolving, the medical community is learning more and more that cancers involve particular genetic profiles that react in certain ways to medications.

“By collecting and analyzing such specimens, we’ll be able to contribute to this learning process and assist in developing newer and more effective treatments for cancer patients,” said Leticia De Los Santos, tissue bank supervisor at Banner MD Anderson.

The tissue bank is tied directly with the MD Anderson Moon Shots program at MD Anderson, which is inspired by America’s push a generation ago to put a man on the moon. The program aims to make a giant leap for patients by accelerating the pace of converting scientific discoveries into clinical advances that reduce cancer deaths. What is learned from these initial cancer “moon shots” will ultimately lead to cures for all types of the disease.

As Banner MD Anderson grows its tissue bank, the program likely will extend to other Banner Health facilities.

Banner MD Anderson, located on the Banner Gateway campus, delivers cancer care to patients in Arizona through the collaboration of Banner Health and MD Anderson. Banner MD Anderson offers focused disease-specific expertise in the medical, radiation and surgical management of the cancer patient; an evidence-based, multidisciplinary approach to patient care; access to clinical trials and new investigative therapies; state-of-the-art technology for the diagnosis, staging and treatment of all types of cancer; oncology expertise in supportive care services.

<http://bannerhealth.mediaroom.com/2014-11-16-Banner-MD-Anderson-Starts-Tissue-Bank-to-Better-Study-and-Treat-Cancer>