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University of Queensland to lead Australian clinical trial of next-gen ovarian cancer screening test

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A screening test that targets extracellular vesicles

Clinical trials of a simple and accurate blood test to detect early-stage ovarian cancer, key to boosting survival rates, will begin at The University of Queensland (UQ) this year.

Researchers will confirm the performance of UQ's test for ovarian cancer in the general population as a screening tool for the disease, dubbed 'the silent killer'.

Professor Carlos Salomon Gallo, Director of the UQ Centre for Extracellular Vesicle Nanomedicine, said around 1,500 women from across Queensland will be recruited to take part in this ground-breaking study to determine its suitability for population-based screening for ovarian cancer.

In this study, researchers will confirm the performance of the test under real-world conditions which will involve the collection of blood samples from multiple sites throughout Queensland and their shipment to a central laboratory for analysis.

Dr Salomon Gallo's team developed the screening test that targets extracellular vesicles (EVs), microscopic bubbles produced by cells that contain proteomic and genomic information that signal the presence of cancer.

UQ has partnered with ASX-listed biotechnology company INOVIQ to develop the world's first EV-based ovarian cancer screening test that has been evaluated on more than 500 blood samples and demonstrated an overall accuracy of 94 per cent.

Postmenopausal women over the age of 45 with no prior history of ovarian cancer will be eligible to enrol in the study.