EXaCT-1 FAQs

What is the EXaCT-1 test?
EXaCT-1 is the first clinical Cancer Whole Exome Sequencing test that is approved by NY State. The purpose of this test is to examine the genomic mutations of all genes (about 22,000 genes in human being) in each patient’s cancer cells. The complete cancer cell-specific mutation profile will provide information about biomarkers which matches currently FDA-approved target therapies and all active clinical trials, but also provide other cancer genome properties which will help doctors choose more efficient and personalized treatment regimes, including immunotherapy, check point inhibitor therapy and gene therapy.

Where is the test performed?
The EXaCT-1 test is performed in the Clinical Genomics Laboratory located at 1300 York Ave, Room LC-904. This laboratory is CAP and CLIA certified. The lab director is Dr. Wei Song.

What kind of specimens can be used for testing?
EXaCT-1 (Whole Exome Sequencing) requires both a tumor sample AND a blood sample. In most cases, a new blood draw will be scheduled and sent to the laboratory.

Tumor Specimens
1. *Formalin-fixed paraffin embedded (FFPE) specimens*
   a. One H&E Slide and 20 Unstained sections are required
   b. The minimum amount of neoplastic cellularity acceptable is 20%

2. *Fixed Fine Needle Aspiration (FNA) specimens*
   a. One H&E Slide and 20 Unstained sections from cell block are required
   b. The minimum amount of neoplastic cellularity acceptable is 20%

Normal (matched) Specimens
1. *Peripheral Blood*
   a. 2-3ml preserved in EDTA (Lavender Top) tube.
   b. Labeled with 2 patient identifiers

2. *Buccal Swab (cheek swab)*
   a. Required for patients with a hematologic disease
   b. Contact the laboratory directly for a buccal swab kit
How is the test ordered?
Oncologist are currently able to order this test through EPIC. The doctor will then work directly with the patient to schedule a time to collect blood. The pathology department will select the most suitable tumor specimen and send it to the Clinical Genomics Laboratory for processing.

Can the test be performed on tissue specimens from outside hospitals?
Yes, however it is required that all material be reviewed in Surgical Pathology. If you are requesting EXaCT-1 on a patient who has material at an outside hospital, please request 15-20 unstained slides (or block) and 1 re-cut H&E slide. Once your office receives the material it can be submitted to Pathology Department with both a Surgical Pathology Consult order AND an EXaCT-1 EPIC order.

Can we order the test again on new tissue from the same patient (a later biopsy)?
Yes, the test can be ordered again if clinically indicated.

Is there a requirement for a consent form?
Yes, due to the ethical considerations of genomic testing, the laboratory requires a clinical consent to be signed by the patient before the EXaCT-1 test can be performed.

How long will it take for results (turn-around time)?
Our estimated turn-around-time is 3-5 weeks once both samples are available in the laboratory.

Will results be in EPIC?
Yes, the results for EXaCT-1 test will be available in both Copath and EPIC.

Is a Pre-Authorization Form required?
Pre-Authorization is currently required for all EXaCT-1 orders placed in the Doctor’s Office (PVT AMB) setting. The physician should begin the process by providing the necessary form to the billing department. The form will be used to communicate with the insurance company to authorize the test.
How much will the test cost patients?
EXaCT-1 is a billable clinical test and will be billed based on specific CPT codes. For the gross billing charges please contact the billing office directly. Health plans/insurance companies will be billed the cost of both the test and the professional interpretation. The patient may be responsible for any deductible and co-payment required by the respective insurance company.

Contact information for billing office:
NGSBilling@med.cornell.edu
T: 212-746-6445  F: 646-962-0477

Who do we contact with questions about the test and results?
For further information on the assay or for questions on the results of the EXaCT-1 test please contact:

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