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Invited Comment

The great importance of markers in the management of non-seminomatous tumours of the testes is well established. The figures from the Irish Testis Tumour Registry indicate a significantly worse prognosis in patients who do not have proper marker studies before, during and after treatment.

Unfortunately, we have not so far had a reliable marker for seminoma. For this reason I found the new work reported here by Koshida and Wahren very exciting. They start with the best summary I have seen of the human alkaline phosphatases. The summary is very clear and very succinct.

The authors go on to give a strong pointer to the possibility that radiolabelled antibodies with specificity

against tumour antigens may prove a very valuable means of diagnosing and pinpointing active seminomatous disease in patients with PLAP-positive tumours. This work should lead to a definite improvement in cure rates of seminoma. I am even tempted to hope that it will point the way to the development of many other valuable cancer markers of a similar type.

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