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Pancreatic cancer, the most lethal cancer today

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Pancreatic cancer is the most aggressive, most lethal cancer in medicine today. The American Cancer Society has estimated that there will be 53,670 new diagnoses of pancreatic cancer and 43,090 deaths in 2017. Those numbers will propel pancreatic cancer to the number three cancer killer, which spot has been held by breast cancer for many years. The overall 5-year survival is less than 10%, but in patients who have received curative resection, the 5-year survival extends to 20%. Pancreas Cancer Action Network has estimated that as a result of the aging population, it will be the number 2 cancer killer by 2025, second only to lung cancer. It has long been accepted that pancreatic cancer is a disease of the elderly. However, there is a subset of much younger individuals who are being diagnosed well before the age of 60. It appears that approximately 10-15% of all individuals diagnosed with pancreatic cancer are below the 60-year-old assumed minimum. The objective of this study is to determine whether there are common genetic mutations, common risk factors, or common past medical factors. The common risk factors in older patients are age and coronary artery disease, but younger patients would not have these diseases. It is important to determine what the younger onset individuals have in common. This will be a secondary analysis of genomic data in the largest cohort of pancreatic cancer patients ever assembled to ferret out the similarities and differences between early onset and normal onset of pancreatic cancer.

Biography

Sally Hodges is currently working in a University of Kentucky Markey Cancer Center, USA

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