

**PROJECT TITLE**

**Molecular Residual Disease Interception in Locoregionally-Advanced High Risk HPV-positive and HPV-negative HNSCC (MERIDIAN)**

**PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR**

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**SCIENTIFIC SUMMARY**

Circulating tumour DNA (ctDNA) has emerged as a potentially important tool to detect molecular residual disease (MRD) after standard treatment in patients with curative cancers. Locoregionally advanced head and neck squamous cell carcinoma (LA-HNSCC) is a type of cancer suited to the study of what is known as MRD interception, since many patients relapse or their cancer recurs despite aggressive therapy. MERIDIAN is a randomized Phase II clinical trial to assess the efficacy of a new immunotherapy regimen in LA-HNSCC patients with detectable ctDNA-based MRD following standard therapy. The research team hypothesizes that the experimental treatment will cause ctDNA clearance and improved survival. If successful, MERIDIAN will contribute to more personalized treatment strategies that are desperately needed for patients with this challenging disease.