
New Blood Test Could Detect Depression

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Researchers at Northwestern University have developed the first blood test that analyzes levels of nine blood biomarkers associated with adult clinical depression. The results of their study were published Tuesday in the journal *Translational Psychiatry*.

The test looks at levels of nine RNA blood markers, which appear to be different among patients with diagnosed clinical depression versus those who do not have depression. RNA are the molecules that help to process DNA genetic code and carry out its instructions.

This preliminary study of 32 adults aged 21 to 79 found that levels of these markers changed after 18 weeks of cognitive behavior therapy. The test was capable of detecting physical evidence that the therapy was working among patients who reported feeling less depressed after receiving therapy for this length of time. The researchers say this finding is especially promising since some patients in the study had not had any luck with antidepressant medications.