

December 28, 2007

Circulation: 15,797

Provista develops cancer test

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Provista Life Sciences LLC is expanding its lab space in Phoenix as it makes available a blood test to detect breast cancer and readies another test for Alzheimer's disease.

Provista will move into its new 14,000-square-foot location in the Biltmore area on Jan. 10, about a year after expanding to 5,000 square feet.



Gartner

Provista just completed the fourth clinical trial for its BT Test for breast cancer, allowing physicians trained by the company to offer the diagnostic service to patients, said CEO William Gartner.

Initially, the test is being offered by 15 Valley doctors. That network is expected to grow as the company seeks other local providers and then reaches outside the area.

One of those local physicians is Dr. Christa Corn, a breast surgeon and medical adviser for Provista.

"For years, we were looking for a better way to test for breast cancer," she said. "This will help pick up some of the women we were missing."

Imaging tests can vary depending on

a woman's build and history. One in 10 women who have mammograms need to have more images taken, according to the American Cancer Society.

Gartner said this is the first blood test for breast cancer, and he recommends the test be given once a year along with the mammogram.

The BT Test, which evaluates levels of cancer-associated biomarkers in blood serum, was found to be 88 percent accurate. The cost is \$395, and the company is working to get insurance companies on board, he said.

"If it works, then they'll all be on the bandwagon," Corn said of the insurers. She recommends the test to all patients 35 and older.

The Cancer Society reports that one in eight women will develop breast cancer, but death rates are on the decline with early detection.

"Our goal is to help save more women's lives from this devastating disease," Gartner said.

Provista expects to release its blood test for Alzheimer's in March and is working on a combined test to detect ovarian, cervical and uterine cancers.

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Provista Life Sciences: 602-224-5500,

www.provistals.com/aboutbttest.aspx