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## 'Junk DNA' could spotlight breast and bowel cancer

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Scientists at The University of Nottingham have found that a group of genetic rogue elements, produced by DNA sequences commonly known as 'junk DNA', could help diagnose breast and bowel cancer. Their research, funded by Cancer Research UK, is published in this month's Genomics journal.

The researchers, led by Dr Cristina Tufarelli, in the School of Graduate Entry Medicine and Health Sciences, discovered that seven of these faulty genetic elements — known as chimeric transcripts — are more common in breast cancer cells. Five were only present in breast cancer cells while two were found in both normal and breast cancer cells.

These rogue elements are produced by DNA sequences called LINE-1 (L1). Despite being labelled as 'junk DNA' it is clear that some of these sequences have important roles in the genome, such as influencing when genes are switched on.

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More information is available from Simon Shears in the Cancer Research UK press office on +44 (0) 20 7061 8054, [simon.shears@cancer.org.uk](mailto:simon.shears@cancer.org.uk); or Lindsay Brooke, Media Relations Manager, The University of Nottingham on +44 (0)115 951 5751, [lindsay.brooke@nottingham.ac.uk](mailto:lindsay.brooke@nottingham.ac.uk)

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