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# England interested in PeriRx of Havertown's oral cancer test

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In this week's print edition, [I have a story](#) about PeriRx, a Havertown, Pa., personalized medicine company that is getting ready to launch a diagnostic test dentists can use to detect oral cancer by collecting saliva samples to be analyzed for certain biomarkers.

Biomarkers are molecules, genes, or genetic characteristic that can be used to detect disease.

Nearly 40,000 people in the United States are diagnosed with oral cancer annually, according to the Oral Cancer Foundation, and 8,000 people die each year from the disease — which works out to roughly one person per hour.

The company's technology, licensed from a UCLA researcher, has attracted interest from people outside the United States.

PeriRx CEO [Stephen M. Swanick](#) said the company has received calls about its diagnostic test from England's National Health Service, which has asked about the company's plans for launching the product in the European Union.

"That's why we are looking to partner with a global collaborator," he said, in reference the company's plan to work with a larger pharmaceutical company to market its tests in the United States and overseas..

PeriRx entered into a worldwide licensing deal for the technology with UCLA in 2010. Swanick said the company just received approval from the Investigation Review Board of Michigan State University to begin a study to validate the early testing conducted by UCLA researcher Dr. [David Wong](#), whose research was supported by a \$2.8 million grant from the National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research awarded to UCLA's School of Dentistry.

The company is now in the process of drafting and creating study protocols for clinical trials testing type-2 diabetes and pre-diabetes markers, its second application for the technology.

Swanick said the company's goals are to have the clinical studies completed, regulatory approval secured and diagnostic tests for both oral cancer and diabetes in the market next summer.

John George covers health care, biotech/pharmaceuticals and sports business.