



# Be a GIST Detective

Uncover the Importance of Biomarker Testing

In detective work, there are specific questions that will reveal evidence that allows you to see the whole picture. Here are **'5 Ws and 1 H'** about biomarker/mutational testing to discuss with your doctor. This information will help you advocate for the vital details you need for your best treatment.



Any patient diagnosed with gastrointestinal stromal tumor (GIST) should receive biomarker testing. GIST is not one cancer, but a sarcoma with many rare subsets. In order to receive the most effective treatment for your mutation, you need to have as much information as possible.



Biomarker testing goes beyond diagnosing GIST. The neoplastic tissue of your tumor will be analyzed to identify mutations, genetic alterations, proteins, and other details that can be measured and analyzed. DNA alteration or changes in cancer cells can illustrate tumor behavior and growth patterns which can determine what treatment therapies might be used. In some cases, genetic testing may be advised to see if your GIST is inheritable.



In the United States, most large academic medical centers have the ability to perform biomarker testing as well as private testing labs.



Testing should be done at the beginning of the diagnostic process, or at any point when resistance to treatment or disease progression is identified.



It's critical to know the driving force behind an individual's GIST tumor. This knowledge helps to ensure an accurate diagnosis and to identify effective personalized treatments in order to avoid ineffective interventions that cost patients time, money, and needless side effects.



Speak with your doctor. Bring all relevant documentation with you - pathology reports, imaging results, etc., plus this sheet for discussion about what type of testing is best for you.

The LRG can help you navigate this process, from diagnosis to testing to treatments.  
Please contact: [patientregistrydepartment@liferaftgroup.org](mailto:patientregistrydepartment@liferaftgroup.org).  
For more info on biomarker testing, go to: <https://liferaftgroup.org/mutations-in-gist/>