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## The Taulí-pT1 classification: a new tool to improve diagnosis of early rectal cancer



Research conducted by the UAB and the Parc Taulí University Hospital has led to the development of the Taulí-pT1 classification. This tool will help determine which surgery is most suitable for rectal cancer patients with *pT1* lesions, and thus avoid aggressive interventions when they are not necessary.

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Rectal cancer is one of the most common tumors in Western countries. When detected at an early stage —specifically in *pT1* lesions, which affect only the innermost layer of the intestinal wall— the chances of cure are very high. However, uncertainty remains regarding which patients can be treated with less aggressive local surgery and which require a more extensive resection to prevent recurrence.

To support this decision-making process, the research team from the Colorectal Surgery Department of Parc Taulí University Hospital and the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (UAB) in collaboration with the Pathological Anatomy service has developed the Taulí-pT1 classification, a novel diagnostic tool that allows a more accurate assessment of lymph node metastasis risk in patients with rectal *pT1* adenocarcinoma. This classification integrates

several histopathological criteria to grade the depth of invasion in order to provide a standardized and easily applicable evaluation in clinical practice.

 Imatge de microscòpia d'un adenocarcinoma de recte

*Infiltrating adenocarcinoma of the rectum at stage pT1, deeply invading the submucosa.*

The study, recently published in the *International Journal of Colorectal Disease*, analysed the interobserver agreement among different specialists when applying this new classification. In total, four pathologists assessed histological images of real cases using the Taulí-pT1 criteria. Results showed a high level of interobserver agreement, confirming the reproducibility and reliability of the classification across different clinical settings.

This work reinforces the potential of the Taulí-pT1 system as a complementary tool to traditional classifications, helping to standardize pathology reports and improve therapeutic decision-making. Ultimately, the goal is to contribute to a more personalized medicine, avoiding unnecessary major surgery in low-risk patients and ensuring optimal treatment for those with more aggressive tumors.

This research was conducted within the Colorectal Surgery Research Group of I3PT (CERCA), in collaboration with the UAB and specialists from other hospitals in Spain. The project exemplifies Parc Taulí's commitment to innovation, multidisciplinary collaboration, and translational research to enhance care for patients with colorectal cancer.

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**References**

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