

Agilent's liquid biopsy Resolution



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Liquid biopsy was a hot area for deals in 2020, and this year has already seen some action with yesterday's purchase by Agilent of Resolution Bioscience. The takeover, which is smaller than other liquid biopsy buyouts at \$550m up front, gives Agilent access to the Medicare-covered Resolution ctDx Lung test, which was launched in September by Resolution's partner Labcorp. The test detects mutations linked with NSCLC to help select the most appropriate targeted therapy. Resolution might be small but it has pitched its test against the big boys: a [2019 study found](#) that the Resolution ctDx Lung test compared favourably to Guardant360, the test sold by the liquid biopsy market leader, Guardant Health. Agilent will now be able to combine this offering with its own tissue biopsy tests. But it is not the only group able to do so: as well as Guardant, other companies with a foot in both camps include Roche's Foundation Medicine subsidiary, Exact Sciences, Invitae, Neogenomics, Natera, and the private groups Caris Life Sciences and Tempus. Perhaps one of these smaller groups might be next to tempt a buyer.

Notable liquid biopsy deals

Target	Acquirer	Up-front cost	Date announced
Resolution Bioscience	Agilent	\$550m	Mar 2021
Thrive Earlier Detection	Exact Sciences	\$1.7bn	Oct 2020*
Grail	Illumina	\$8bn	Sep 2020*
Archerdx	Invitae	\$886m	Jun 2020
Foundation Medicine	Roche	\$2.4bn**	Jun 2018

**Deals yet to close; **Roche already owned 56% stake in Foundation. Source: EvaluateMedtech & company releases.*