

## BIOMEDICINE

From San Francisco, at the 91st Annual Meeting of the American Association for Cancer Research

# Protein predicts prostate cancer spread

Prostate cancer patients who harbor high concentrations of a protein called thymosine beta-15 in their tumors face an increased risk that the cancer will spread, new research shows.

Researchers at Harvard Medical School in Boston tracked 32 prostate cancer patients who received only radiation therapy. At the start of the study, the scientists measured the thymosine beta-15 concentrations in each man's tumor tissue.

After 6 years, cancer had spread to bones in 8 of the 13 patients who had had high thymosine beta-15 concentrations, reports radiation oncologist Arnab Chakravarti. In contrast, one of the eight patients who had had little of the protein had any tumor spread.

Because prostate cancer's course varies, says Roy S. Weiner of Tulane University Medical Center in New Orleans, "anything that can home in on the prognosis of individual patients [and] guide us in clinical intervention is of tremendous value.

—N.S.