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Your Health
BY DAVID BJERKLIE

THE AWFUL WAIT One of the worst things about breast cancer treatment is the awful wait after a patient starts chemotherapy and before she finds out if it's working. That may change. Italian researchers have tracked the rate at which a radioactive tracer "washes out" of patients' tumors and found that those with low wash-out rates respond better to chemo. With the data, doctors can switch treatments early or use drugs to boost the body's ability to respond.

ALSO WAITING... Similarly, it can take weeks before patients suffering from depression respond to medication Ñ and even then, first drugs fail up to 40% of the time. But UCLA researchers have shown that brain scans can predict whether a drug will work long before patients sense any change. The sooner ineffective drugs can be abandoned, the sooner patients feel better.

AUTOFOCUS Researchers from Caltech and the University of California, San Francisco, have devised an implantable lens for cataract patients that can be recalibrated weeks after surgery. The lens contains a photosensitive compound that can be activated by a tiny beam of UV light. "We can make precise power adjustments after the lens is in place, the wound is healed and the eye is stabilized," says UCSF's Dr. Daniel Schwartz. The experimental lens might even lead to an alternative to LASIK surgery.

Sources: The Journal of Nuclear Medicine; Neuropsychopharmacology; UCSF