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UAB researcher Andra Frost, M.D., associate professor in the Department of Pathology and scientist in the Experimental Therapeutics Program of the UAB Comprehensive Cancer Center, has been awarded a
Susan G. Komen for the Cure
research grant for $600,000 to study the role of the oncogene
Gli1
in the metastasis of triple negative breast cancer, an especially aggressive subtype of the disease.

An oncogene is a gene that has the potential to cause cancer. In tumor cells, they are often mutated or expressed at high levels. *Gli1* is known to regulate the presence of a variety of molecules that are important for cancer development, growth and metastasis. It mostly has been studied in skin and brain cancers, but its role in other cancers, such as breast cancer, is less established.

Frost is hoping to understand how *Gli1* is promoting the metastasis of triple negative breast cancer. Currently there are no widely used targeted therapies for the treatment of triple negative breast cancer. Ultimately, Frost says, “We want to show that inhibiting the function of the
Gli1
will slow or stop the growth and metastasis of triple negative breast cancer.”

The UAB Comprehensive Cancer Center is among the 40 cancer centers in the nation to meet the stringent criteria for the National Cancer Institute's comprehensive designation. The center is a leader in groundbreaking research, reducing cancer disparities and leading-edge patient care.