

Prostate Cancer: Getting the Facts



WHAT IS THE PROSTATE?

The prostate is a small walnut-shaped gland found only in males. It is located in front of the rectum and below the urinary bladder. The function of the prostate is to make a portion of the fluid that protects and provides nutrients to the sperm cells in semen.¹

WHAT IS PROSTATE CANCER?

Prostate cancer is one of the most common cancers found in men, it is second only to skin cancer. The majority of prostate cancers develop from the gland cells located in the prostate. Gland cells create the prostate fluid that is a component of the semen.¹

Prostate cancer is generally slow to develop, and in the early stages it stays in the prostate gland. In some cases, prostate cancer can cause minimal damage and require little to

no treatment. In fact in some men it goes undetected. Prostate cancer that is considered aggressive however, spreads quickly. Like most types of cancer, when detected early it stands a better chance of effective treatment.¹

Estimated new cases of prostate cancer in the United States in 2014: 233,000²

SIGNS OF PROSTATE CANCER INCLUDE:

- Blood in urine
- Pain or burning while urinating
- Frequent urination
- Weak urination flow
- Continuous pain in the back, hips, or pelvis⁴

More than 2 million men in the US count themselves as prostate cancer survivors.³

TREATMENT OPTIONS FOR PROSTATE CANCER

Detecting prostate cancer early can greatly affect survival rates. Common treatments for prostate cancer include active surveillance, surgery, radiation therapy, hormone therapy, chemotherapy, and biological therapy. Treatment options are generally used separately although in some cases they may be combined.⁵

When choosing the best treatment option, it is important to take a few considerations into account including your age, health condition, the stage of the prostate cancer, possible side effects, and the most likely outcome of the treatment.⁵

It is estimated that approximately \$11.9 billion is spent each year in the United States on prostate cancer treatment.⁶

PREVENTION OF PROSTATE CANCER

Prostate cancer generally occurs in older men, it is rarely found in those younger than 40 years old. Most prevalently, it is found in African American men. As is the case with colon and breast cancer, genetics play a role in developing prostate cancer. Approximately 5% to 10% of prostate cancer cases are believed to be caused by inherited genetic factors.⁷

There are, however, some steps you can take to help battle the odds. A healthy diet plays a huge part in general cancer prevention. Eating well before, during, and after cancer treatment is also crucial. Typical foods and supplements used to treat and prevent prostate cancer include soy, pomegranate, green tea, and vitamins D and E.⁸



In the United States, 1 out of 5 men will be diagnosed with prostate cancer.⁸

QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR DOCTOR

8 questions to ask your doctor when deciding on prostate cancer treatment options:

- What are my treatment options and which do you recommend for me?
- What are the anticipated benefits of each type of treatment?
- What are the risks and possible side effects of each treatment? How can I manage them?
- What can I do to prepare for treatment?
- Will I need to stay in the hospital and for what duration?
- What is the estimated cost of treatment and is it covered by my insurance?
- How will treatment affect my normal day-to-day activities and body functions?
- Would you recommend a clinical trial?⁹

Medical professionals define the stages of prostate cancer with the Roman numerals I, II, III, and IV. A Stage I cancer is considered early-stage, and a Stage IV cancer is advanced and has spread throughout the body.⁵

More than 90 percent of all prostate cancers are diagnosed at an early stage.⁹

COPING WITH PROSTATE CANCER

Dealing with a prostate cancer diagnosis can cause many stressful emotional reactions and thoughts including, money, family duties, and future preparations. When you feel like you are having trouble coping, the most crucial action you can take is to seek help in understanding and dealing with your diagnosis. Talk to your doctor, seek individual counseling, or go to a cancer support group. There is power and comfort in knowing you are not alone.¹⁰

Sources:

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- 10 Coping with Prostate Cancer, WebMD, Retrieved Aug 29, 2014, <http://www.webmd.com/prostate-cancer/guide/coping-prostate-cancer>



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