

About Prostate Cancer

Prostate cancer is the most common non-skin cancer in America. One in six American men will be diagnosed with prostate cancer, making men 35% more likely to be diagnosed with prostate cancer than women are to be diagnosed with breast cancer.

Detection, Diagnosis and Staging

Approximately 90% of all prostate cancers are detected when the tumor is confined to the prostate or to its immediate environs. Nearly 100% of men diagnosed with prostate cancer at this stage will be “cured” of their disease after treatment. Because men with very early-stage disease often do not exhibit symptoms, these cancers are typically detected by the PSA (prostate-specific antigen) blood test and DRE (digital rectal exam) screening test. A diagnosis of prostate cancer is made via biopsy of the prostate; examination of the cancer cells removed during the biopsy as well as additional imaging tests enable physicians to determine the stage of disease.

Treating Localized Disease

Early-stage prostate cancers are most often treated with active surveillance, surgery or radiation therapy. During active surveillance, the growth of the cancer is carefully monitored with regular PSA blood tests and other exams until a decision is made to treat the cancer with surgery or radiation. During prostatectomy, the prostate and its surrounding tissue are surgically removed; during radiation therapy, directed radiation is used to kill the prostate cancer cells using external high-intensity radiation beams or implanted radiation-emitting pellets.

Treating Advancing Disease

For men with advancing stages of prostate cancer, hormone therapy is typically used to lower the levels of testosterone, which is known to fuel the growth of prostate cancer. Chemotherapy is used to deliver cancer-killing medications systemically, and specialized therapies are often used to target prostate cancer cells that settle in the bone.

The Future of Prostate Cancer Research

Because of the continued investment in prostate cancer research by the Prostate Cancer Foundation, biopharmaceutical companies, and government agencies, novel therapies and alternative treatment strategies are continually being studied in research laboratories and clinical trials across the country. All of these programs serve to support the mission of the Prostate Cancer Foundation: to find better treatments and a cure for prostate cancer.

Prostate Cancer Statistics

General Information

- Prostate cancer is the most common non-skin cancer in America.
- One in six American men will be diagnosed with prostate cancer.
- A man is 35% more likely to develop prostate cancer than a woman is to develop breast cancer.
- In 2008, more than 186,000 American men will be diagnosed with prostate cancer. That's one new case every 2.5 minutes.
- In 2008, more than 28,000 American men will die from prostate cancer. That's one death every 19 minutes.
- Approximately 2 million American men currently have prostate cancer.
- A non-smoking man is more likely to develop prostate cancer than he is to develop colon, bladder, melanoma, lymphoma and kidney cancer combined.

Risk Factors, Symptoms and Screening

- African American men are 56% more likely to be diagnosed with prostate cancer than Caucasian men and are nearly 2.5 times as likely to die from the disease.
- The only well-established risk factors for prostate cancer are age, ethnicity and family history of the disease; however, high dietary fat intake may also be a significant risk factor.
- The chance of being diagnosed with prostate cancer increases rapidly after age 50. More than 65% of all prostate cancers are diagnosed in men over the age of 65.
- Early prostate cancer usually has no symptoms and is most commonly detected through prostate cancer screening tests such as the PSA blood test and digital rectal exam.

Treatments and Survival Rates

- Prostate cancer can be eliminated from the body by surgery or radiation – if diagnosed at an early stage. However, every year, 70,000 men require additional treatment due to a recurrence of prostate cancer.
- Because approximately 90% of all prostate cancers are detected in the local and regional stages, the cure rate for prostate cancer is very high—nearly 100% of men diagnosed at this stage will be disease-free after five years.

Cancer-Related Deaths

- In 2008, more than 28,000 American men will lose their lives to prostate cancer.
- Every 19 minutes, a man dies from prostate cancer in the United States.

Projections

- The number of new cases and deaths of prostate cancer is expected to increase dramatically over the next decade as baby boomer men age into the target zone for prostate cancer.
- If there is no change in prevention or treatment strategies, by 2015, there will be approximately 3 million men battling prostate cancer.
- If there are no better treatments or a cure for prostate cancer, by 2015, 45,000 men will die from the disease each year.

The Prostate Cancer Foundation

During the past 15 years, the Prostate Cancer Foundation has raised more than \$320 million and provided funding to more than 1,400 prostate cancer researchers at nearly 150 institutions worldwide. The PCF also advocates for greater awareness of prostate cancer and more governmental resources, resulting in a 20-fold increase in government funding for prostate cancer.