

September is Prostate Cancer Awareness Month

Courtesy of www.zerocancer.org

32,000 Men die every year from Prostate Cancer

WHAT IS PROSTATE CANCER?

The prostate gland is a part of the male reproductive system. It is surrounded by other glands, nerves and organs involved in sexual function. It is wrapped around the urethra and helps control the flow of urine. While you can live without a prostate, its location makes prostate cancer difficult to treat.

Sometimes cells keep growing beyond their natural lifespan and can swell up into a tumor. Tumors can be harmless (benign), or harmful to the cells around it (malignant). Cancer cells can remain in the prostate (local), its immediate surroundings (regional), or cells can break free and get into the blood or lymphatic system which causes cancer to spread to other parts of the body (metastatic).

Prostate cancer is a common, but usually slow-growing, cancer compared to other types of cancer. It is fed by, and generally depends on, male hormones

GET TESTED EVERY YEAR

The American Urological Association says men at age 40 should have a PSA test to establish a baseline for future comparison and to determine PSA velocity (the rate at which a man's PSA score increases). This is especially the case for men at greater risk (see Risk Quiz at bottom of the page).

* There are two tests that should be done together to increase the accuracy of diagnosis:

A blood test that measures Prostate Specific Antigen (PSA)

A physical exam of the prostate, the Digital Rectal Exam (DRE)

Testing doesn't show whether you actually have prostate cancer. It only signals a prostate abnormality, such as an enlarged prostate, an infection or perhaps cancer.

WHO IS AT RISK?

The average man has about a 17% chance of getting prostate cancer and a 3% chance of dying from it. Your risk increases with age. Although only one in 10,000 under age 40 will be diagnosed, the rate climbs to 1 in 39 for ages 40 to 59 and 1 in 14 for ages 60 to 69. More than 65% of all prostate cancers are diagnosed in men over 65. African American men have a 60% higher risk of getting prostate cancer than white men and are nearly 2.5 times more likely to die from it.

RISK  QUIZ

Are you over the age of 65?

Are you African American?

Were you exposed to Agent Orange in Vietnam or Korea?

Did your father or brother have prostate cancer?