

# Prostate Cancer

Most prostate cancer begins in the gland cells in the prostate and is known as adenocarcinoma. Prostate cancer is the most common form of cancer among men in the United States. Known as the silent killer because men often do not have symptoms, prostate cancer is a leading cause of cancer deaths among men. However, early detection is critical to survival and in fact, if prostate cancer is detected early and before the cancer spreads, patients have a nearly 100 percent chance of survival after five years. With early diagnosis and treatment improvements over the past 25 years, survival rates have increased dramatically for all stages of prostate cancer.

## Statistics

- One in six men will be diagnosed with prostate cancer in his lifetime.
- In the United States, one new case occurs every 2.5 minutes, and a man dies from prostate cancer every 19 minutes.
- American men are 35 percent more likely to be diagnosed with prostate cancer than women with breast cancer.
- In 2008, more than 186,320 new cases of prostate cancer will be diagnosed in the United States.
- In Texas, it is estimated that more than 15,506 new cases of prostate cancer will be diagnosed this year, and 1,895 men will die from the disease.

## Risk Factors

- **Age:** Men age 65 and older account for about 64 percent of all prostate cancer cases diagnosed.
- **Family History:** Men with close relatives (father or brother) who have had prostate cancer are twice as likely to develop the disease.
- **Race:** African Americans have the highest rate of prostate cancer in the United States and are more likely to die from the disease than any other racial group.
- **Diet:** Men who consume high amounts of red meat or dairy products have a higher risk of prostate cancer.

## Symptoms

The following may be symptoms of prostate cancer but could be linked to other health conditions. If these symptoms are present, men are encouraged to consult their physician for proper testing:

- Frequent urination, especially at night
- Difficulty controlling urination or bowel movements
- Painful or burning urination
- Blood in urine or semen
- Difficulty having an erection
- Painful ejaculation
- Frequent pain or stiffness in spine, hips, ribs, and other bones
- Weakness or numbness in the legs or feet
- Loss of appetite and weight

## Prevention

- Nutrition
  - Eat five or more servings of fruits and vegetables daily. Tomatoes, pink grapefruit, and watermelon are rich in substances that may help prevent prostate cancer.
  - Reduce consumption of red meat and dairy products.
  - Consumption of soy products may control testosterone levels which are linked to prostate cancer.
  - Ask your doctor about appropriate vitamin intake, as this can lower the risk of prostate cancer.
- Lifestyle
  - Schedule yearly prostate screenings beginning at age 50. Men at high risk (African American men and men with a family history of prostate cancer before age 65) should begin testing at age 45. Prostate screenings should include the PSA (prostate-specific antigen) blood test and DRE (digital rectal exam).
  - Regular exercise may decrease the risk of prostate cancer.
  - Since obesity can further complicate prostate cancer, maintain a healthy body weight.

## Treatment Options

Prostate cancer, depending on the stage, may be treated by different members of the cancer care team – urologists, medical oncologists, and radiation oncologists. Consultation with each of these specialists is encouraged where appropriate. Treatment options vary depending on how advanced the cancer is and if it has spread to other parts of the body. Physicians will determine the most appropriate treatment for each patient, but possible treatment options include surgery, radiation therapy, hormone therapy, and chemotherapy.

Sources: American Cancer Society, Prostate Cancer Foundation, and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention