

Prostate Cancer: Is Screening Right for You?

- Prostate cancer is the most common cancer in men. It is the second leading cause of cancer deaths in men.
- Certain men are at higher risk of prostate cancer:
 - African American men, men of African descent, men with a father, brother, or son with prostate cancer, and all men over 50 are at higher risk.
- There are two tests that screen a man for prostate cancer.
 - The digital rectal exam (DRE) is where a doctor feels the prostate gland by putting a finger inside the rectum.
 - The PSA (prostate specific antigen) is a blood test for prostate cancer.
 - The PSA is done along with a DRE to screen for prostate cancer.
 - The PSA test can find prostate cancer earlier than the DRE alone.
- The PSA test can be high because of *other* prostate problems--so it does *not* always mean cancer. And, the PSA test can sometimes be normal even if a man has prostate cancer.
- A PSA test that is high may lead to a biopsy to see whether a man has prostate cancer. The biopsy may cause side effects. The biopsy and treatment may or may not be paid for by the local cancer program.
- No one is sure yet whether getting a DRE and PSA test every year will lower the number of deaths from prostate cancer. Some information now suggests that these screening tests may lower the number of deaths.
- If a man has early prostate cancer, he can choose how to handle the cancer:
 - He and his doctor may choose to wait and watch to see if the prostate cancer is changing. He may choose to have surgery, radiation therapy, or hormonal therapy. There are often side effects of the treatment.
- Those men who are most likely to benefit from prostate cancer screening are:
 - men who are 50 to 70 years old,
 - men who are 45 to 50 years old who are African-American or of African descent, and
 - men who are 45 to 50 years old who have a father, brother, or son with prostate cancer
 - men who are 40 to 45 years old who
 - are African-American, of African descent *and* have a father, brother, or son with prostate cancer, or
 - have two relatives (father, brothers, or sons) with prostate cancer.
- If a man has a PSA and a DRE test, he will get the results of the tests. If either of the tests is abnormal, he will be referred to a doctor who will explain what the results mean and what his options are.

If you don't get your results in 6 weeks after you have the test, call the prostate cancer screening program at _____ for your results.