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Man To Man News

Issue 3, 2010

Welcome to *Man To Man News*, a publication of the American Cancer Society Man To Man® prostate cancer education and support program. Whether you are newly diagnosed, currently in treatment, or one of the growing number of survivors, you will find that *Man To Man News* has timely, practical, and trustworthy information on topics that really matter to you – such as the latest medical research, clinical trials, support groups, treatment options and their possible side effects, nutrition and fitness, and inspirational stories of men who have survived this disease.

For more help in your personal battle with prostate cancer, or to find the Man to Man support group nearest you, please contact your local American Cancer Society or call 1-800-227-2345. Together with our millions of supporters, the American Cancer Society saves lives and creates a world with less cancer and more birthdays by helping people stay well, helping people get well, by finding cures, and fighting back against the disease.

The Benefits of Regular Exercise

If you've recently finished treatment for prostate cancer, exercise may be one of the last things on your mind. Even if you've been cancer-free for years, you may feel a little unsure about starting an exercise program.

But there are plenty of reasons to lace up your sneakers and commit to regular physical activity. Research shows that even a moderate amount of exercise – taking regular walks, for example – reduces overall death rates in men with prostate cancer. The more vigorous the exercise, the greater the benefits, one recent study from the Harvard School of Public Health shows.

Regular exercise has many other benefits, as well. It can help reduce the bone-weary fatigue many prostate cancer survivors feel even long after treatment has stopped. And it can help prevent the loss of lean body tissue and increased body fat that can be side effects of some prostate cancer treatments, such as hormone therapy.

Working out regularly helps your overall health, too. By improving your cardiovascular (heart and circulation) fitness, strengthening your muscles, and lowering anxiety and depression, exercise can help lower your risk of heart disease and diabetes, as well as some other types of cancer. And it makes you feel better about yourself.

Get Started Safely

Keep in mind that you may not be able to be as active – or as active at the same intensity – as you were before treatment. You may need to start slower and not progress as quickly as you usually might. The American Cancer Society recommends that you work up to 30 minutes a day if you can. However, when you're just starting out, it may be that you do 10 minutes 3 times a week, and add 5 minutes to that over a 1- to 2- week period.

The bottom line is to just do what you can do – but be sure to talk to your doctor before starting any exercise program to make sure it's safe for you.

See [Benefits of Regular Exercise](#) next page



Benefits of Regular Exercise, continued

Unsure of how to start? The American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM) has a special certification designed just for health and fitness professionals interested in working with cancer survivors. It was funded by a grant from the American Cancer Society and developed with experts from both ACSM and the Society. This specialty certification allows cancer patients and survivors to find fitness professionals who can help them exercise safely and meet their exercise goals while they are undergoing treatment and after they have completed treatment.

To find a certified trainer in your area, visit the American College of Sports Medicine's ProFinder site at acsm.org. Some YMCAs also offer exercise programs for cancer patients. Check with your local branch.

Here are some general tips for cancer patients and survivors to keep in mind when starting an exercise program:

- Put off exercise if you are severely anemic.
- If you have low white blood cell counts or compromised immune function, avoid gyms.
- If you are severely fatigued and just don't feel up to doing any exercise, try 10 minutes of simple stretching a day.



- If you have balance issues as a result of treatment, be careful to reduce your risk of falling. You may want to try a recumbent bike, for example, instead of walking on a treadmill.
- If you have joint discomfort and/or muscle pain, try "cross training" – do different types of exercises on different days; you'll use different muscle groups/joints to help avoid overstraining a particular area.

In addition to exercising regularly, it's also important to eat right. Aim for at least 5 or more servings of vegetables and fruits each day, choosing whole-grain foods instead of white flour and sugars, and limiting meats that are high in fat.

For ideas on getting active and adopting healthier eating habits, check out the tools and resources from the American Cancer Society at cancer.org or call your American Cancer Society at 1-800-227-2345. We want to help you get well.

Making Sense of Prostate Cancer Treatment Options

You just learned you have prostate cancer. Should you have surgery, radiation, or some combination of both? Hormone therapy? What about careful monitoring, with no active treatment? Your doctor, friends, and relatives may all have different opinions about which treatment is right for you. Here are some resources that can help you make sense of your options.

Prostate Cancer Detailed Guide

You can find descriptions of different prostate cancer treatments in the American Cancer Society's Prostate Cancer Detailed Guide. This guide includes information on how different stages of prostate cancer are generally treated, as well as a list of questions you should discuss with your doctor. The Prostate Cancer Detailed Guide is available to read and print at cancer.org, or you can have a copy mailed to you by calling 1-800-227-2345.

NexProfiler Prostate Cancer Profiler Tool

This free tool, brought to you by the American Cancer Society and NexCura, offers detailed information on prostate cancer treatment options and personalized reports that help you weigh the pros and cons of each treatment. It also provides personalized questions that you can go over with your doctor. The tool is continuously reviewed and revised by experts in the field. Registration is required. Find the tool at cancer.org.

National Comprehensive Cancer Network (NCCN) Treatment Guidelines

NCCN, an organization that represents 21 of the nation's most respected comprehensive cancer centers, develops detailed treatment guidelines for physicians for many different cancer types, including prostate cancer. These guidelines are based on the research and experience of a panel of experts, who sort through all of the evidence available and make treatment recommendations based on factors specific to your cancer. Many practitioners make use of these guidelines. You might ask your doctor if he uses these guidelines when considering the best treatment for you. And you can refer your doctor to these guidelines, if he is not familiar with them. For more information, visit nccn.org.

Clinical Trials Matching Service

The American Cancer Society Clinical Trials Matching Service is a free, confidential program that helps patients, their families, and health care workers find clinical trials most appropriate to a patient's medical and personal situation. Call 1-800-303-5961 or visit cancer.org for more information.

The Internet also offers a host of useful tools and resources, but there's a lot of bad information out there, as well. For information you can trust, the American Cancer Society's Web site, cancer.org, is a good place to start.

Fight Back against Cancer

Interested in taking your personal experience with cancer to Capitol Hill? Join the American Cancer Society Cancer Action NetworkSM, the Society's nonprofit, nonpartisan advocacy group, and make a difference in the fight against cancer. For more information, visit acscan.org.



From the News Desk

For the latest prostate cancer news, visit the American Cancer Society's Web site at cancer.org.

Prostate Cancer Hormone Therapy May Increase Heart Risk

While hormone therapy is beneficial for many men with prostate cancer, there is growing concern that it may increase heart disease risk factors, according to a report by leading health organizations.

Hormone therapy is most often prescribed to men whose prostate cancer has spread to other parts of the body. For some less advanced cancers, it may also be used before or along with other treatments, such as surgery or radiation therapy, to try to make these treatments work better. Some doctors may also prescribe hormone therapy for older men or those with serious health problems who have early stage cancers, as an alternative to "active surveillance" or "watchful waiting" (see key words section of this newsletter). Hormone therapy does not cure prostate cancer, but it can shrink prostate tumors or slow their growth.

However, taking these drugs can come with some difficult side effects: low sex drive, impotence, loss of muscle mass, and fatigue, among other things. Hormone therapy (also called androgen deprivation therapy, or ADT) has also been shown to increase body fat, raise low-density lipoprotein (LDL) cholesterol (the "bad" cholesterol), and cause blood sugar abnormalities – all of which can contribute to heart problems.

And in a recent report, experts reviewed current published research on the topic and found that ADT use may increase the risk of heart disease and possibly the risk of cardiac death. More research must be done, the authors concluded.

In the meantime, men and the doctors treating them for prostate cancer should discuss the risks and benefits of treatment. Given the possible effects of ADT on heart disease risk factors, men might also want to follow up with their primary care doctor within a few months of starting treatment. If you're taking hormone therapy and currently have heart disease risk factors, ask your doctor if taking additional preventive measures, such as adopting a healthier lifestyle and/or starting on appropriate medicines, might be right for you.

FDA Approves Prostate Cancer Vaccine

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) recently approved Dendreon Corporation's Provenge, a "vaccine" that uses a patient's own immune system to fight advanced prostate cancer that is no longer responding to hormone therapy. While not a cure, Provenge offers hope to men with advanced disease, many of whom have few treatment options available to them.

The FDA's green light is based primarily on results from a randomized phase III study showing that men who received Provenge infusions lived an average of about 4 months longer than men who were getting the placebo (26 months versus 22 months). Patients receiving Provenge reported few side effects, and those they did report – chills, fever, headache, fatigue, nausea, joint aches, and back pain – usually went away within a few days.

The drug did not appear to slow progression of the disease, despite improving survival. Still, Provenge "represents a very important step forward in cancer treatment," says Len Lichtenfeld, MD, deputy chief medical officer for the American Cancer Society.

Advanced prostate cancer can be difficult to treat. Hormone therapy is often effective for a time, but eventually the cancer stops responding to it. Chemotherapy can also help some men at this point, but can have its own serious side effects. Provenge was approved for use against these cancers.

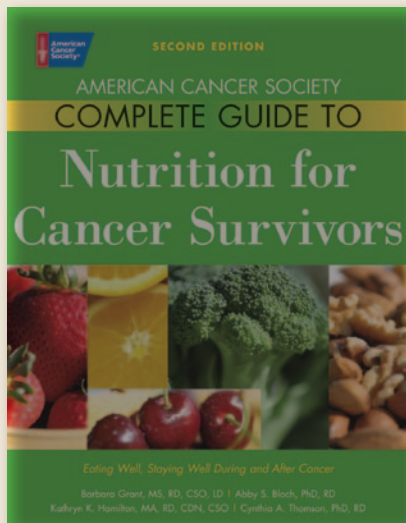
The vaccine is made by removing some of a patient's white blood cells and sending them to a lab, where they are activated by exposing them to a protein found on prostate cancer cells. The cells are then given back to the patient about 3 days later, in a process similar to a blood transfusion. This is done 3 times, with about 2 weeks in between each dose.

It is not yet clear how much Provenge will cost, or how Medicare will handle coverage of the drug. Availability will also be limited for the first year after approval, according to Dendreon.



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New Book Gets You in the Know about Nutrition

Eating a healthy and varied diet is one of the undeniable keys to better health. But putting the “eat right” mantra into practice can be challenging, especially when you’re coping with a prostate cancer diagnosis or the challenges of treatment. To help shed light on how to get the nutrition you need throughout your cancer journey, the American Cancer Society has released a new book called *The American Cancer Society Complete Guide to Nutrition for Cancer Survivors, Second Edition*.

Written by a panel of oncology and nutrition experts, this helpful guide explores the relationship between nutrition and cancer in numerous ways, from how food is grown to how it can help strengthen your immune system. The book offers tips on coping with eating and digestive changes during active treatment. It also explores how good nutrition can enhance your survivorship – and reduce your risk of cancer – long after treatment ends. With clear information and detailed suggestions, it’s a reliable resource that shows you how to use the power of nutrition to help you get well and stay well before, during, and after treatment.

The American Cancer Society Complete Guide to Nutrition for Cancer Survivors, Second Edition is available from the Society’s online bookstore at cancer.org or by calling 1-800-227-2345.

Your Prostate Cancer Questions Answered

If you have a question about prostate cancer, we can help you find answers. Call us anytime, day or night, at 1-800-227-2345 to speak with a trained Cancer Information Specialist. Or, go to cancer.org and click “Contact Us” at the top of the page to email your question.

Question: I’ve read that a supplement called saw palmetto may prevent prostate cancer. Is that true? Are there other supplements I should be taking to prevent this disease?

Answer: The relationship between cancer and dietary supplements is complicated. Although some supplements have been proven to be effective when used as complementary therapies to relieve treatment symptoms and side effects, many have not gone through the testing needed to verify their safety or their ability to treat or prevent cancer. As a result, it’s important to talk to your health care team before using supplements of any kind.

In the case of saw palmetto, chemicals known as sterols found in the plant’s berries are said to interfere with the ability of hormones to cause prostate cells to grow. Some studies have shown that saw palmetto may help relieve some symptoms of an enlarged prostate, which is not the same thing as having prostate cancer. No known study results show that saw palmetto can prevent or treat prostate cancer.

In exploring the effects of other supplements on this disease, researchers have had mixed results. One large study known as the SELECT trial showed that neither selenium nor vitamin E supplements were effective at protecting men from prostate cancer. Promising research on vitamin D and hormonal medicines called alpha-reductase inhibitors is under way, but study results are not yet clear.

There’s no magic pill to prevent cancer, but there are some proven ways that can help reduce your cancer risk, including eating right, staying active, and making other healthy lifestyle choices.

* Key words

Active surveillance: also known as “watchful waiting,” active surveillance is an option for some men with slow-growing prostate cancers because it is not known whether treating their cancer with surgery or radiation will actually help them live longer. These treatments have risks and side effects that may outweigh the possible benefits for some men. Active surveillance involves active monitoring, usually a PSA and digital rectal exam about every 3 to 6 months, and intermittent prostate biopsies.



A Numbers Expert Shares His Experience with Prostate Cancer

When he was diagnosed with prostate cancer in January 2009, Clement Ward had been a professor of agricultural economics at Oklahoma State University for 3 decades. Given his background, it was only natural that the economist would look closely at the test results and chart his own numbers.

Several years earlier, his family practice doctor had referred him to a urologist after noticing swelling in one testicle. While it was later determined to be nothing serious, Ward decided to get regular checkups, which included prostate-specific antigen (PSA) testing.

Ward was vigilant about monitoring his PSA levels; high levels can be a sign of prostate cancer. Though his PSA numbers rose from 1999 to 2007, they were well below the level that would traditionally raise concern. From 2007 to 2009, his numbers continued to climb, and his urologist ordered a series of PSA-specific tests. His urologist recommended a biopsy and afterward, Ward met with him to discuss the results.

“When he told me the biopsy showed cancer of the prostate, I was not surprised,” he recalls. “Immediately, I thought, ‘What do we do now?’”

Getting Educated about Prostate Cancer

Ward’s urologist told him about his treatment options and pointed him to some resources to learn more about prostate cancer. The doctor also suggested talking to other men who had prostate cancer and assured him they were everywhere.

“He was correct,” says Ward. “Most men who have prostate cancer may not announce it publicly, put a sticker on their car, or have a flag with ‘I had prostate cancer!’ at their house.”

Ward found it extremely helpful to talk to others about their experience. He also consulted the American Cancer Society’s book called *Complete Guide to Prostate Cancer*.

After doing research and weighing his options, Ward chose surgery for 2 reasons: 1) he wanted to try to remove the cancer completely, and 2) should the cancer reappear later in life, radiation likely would still be an option for treatment.

Successful Surgery and the Phases of Recovery

About 6 weeks after his diagnosis, Ward had a radical retropubic prostatectomy. He stayed one night in the hospital and was ready to go home the next morning.

“The pain was not as bad as I feared,” he says. “On a scale of 1 to 10 with 10 being the worst, I don’t recall my pain ever surpassing 4 or maybe 5 while in the hospital.”

What’s more, all evidence suggested the cancer had been confined to the prostate and was completely removed, which was great news.

Ward’s wife and family were very helpful during his recovery. It was important to have a second pair of hands around, he says, because everything took longer, from getting dressed to taking a shower.

And there were side effects to deal with. Ward knew incontinence was a likely consequence of surgery. “However, thinking you’re prepared for incontinence and experiencing it are NOT the same,” he says. “It was frustrating at times.” He also suffered from erectile dysfunction, another common side effect of prostate cancer surgery.

Still, it wasn’t long before Ward began increasing his time at work, doing gradual exercise on the treadmill, and resuming his yard work and household chores.

More than a year later, Ward is happy to report his PSA levels are low.



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This world is not just a dream. Eleven million cancer survivors will celebrate birthdays this year. That's a sign of progress, proof that a world with more birthdays is possible. See how you can help at morebirthdays.com. Or call 1-800-227-2345. Together we'll stay well, get well, find cures, and fight back.

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