

Chronic Disease Prevention Bulletin

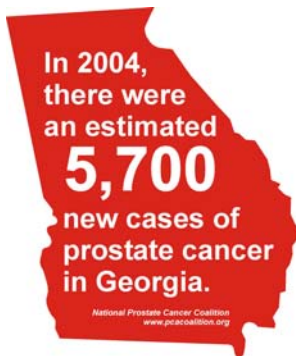
September 2005

Distributed by: Health Promotion, Southeast Health District
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Prostate Cancer Awareness Month

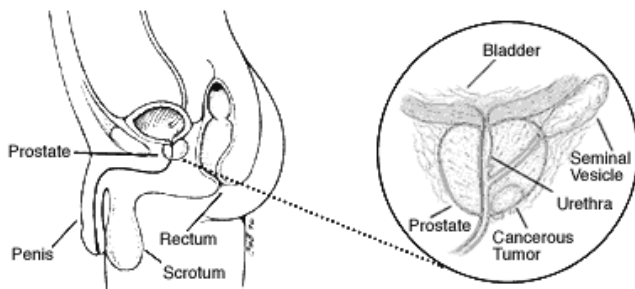
One out of every 6 American men is at lifetime risk of prostate cancer. To raise awareness of this health issue, the U.S. Senate unanimously adopted a resolution (SR 230) proclaiming September as **National Prostate Cancer Awareness Month**. This marks a huge victory in the fight to raise awareness about a disease that will kill an estimated 30,350 American men in this year alone...**that's one death every 18 minutes.**



According to estimates from the National Prostate Cancer Coalition, prostate cancer will be diagnosed every 2.25 minutes; **over 232,000 new cases** are expected in 2005. It is **the most commonly diagnosed cancer in America among men.** That's more new cases than any other form of cancer.

What is Prostate Cancer?

The prostate, found only in men, is a walnut-sized gland located in front of the rectum and under the bladder. The prostate continues to grow as a man reaches adulthood and is maintained after it reaches normal size as long as male hormones are produced. If male hormone levels are low, the prostate gland will not fully develop. Although several cell types are found in the prostate, over 99% of prostate cancers develop from the glandular cells. Glandular cells make the seminal fluid that is secreted by the prostate.



Most prostate cancers grow slowly. Autopsy studies show that many older men who died of other diseases also had a prostate cancer that never affected them and that neither they nor their doctor were aware of. Over 60% of men between ages 60 and 70 will have prostate cancer detected at autopsy. That number climbs to 80% for men in their 70s. Some prostate cancers, however, can grow and spread quickly.

Know Your Risk Factors

Although a single cause for prostate cancer hasn't been discovered, researchers have identified several risk factors that increase the risk of developing the disease:

Age: The chance of prostate cancer increases rapidly after age 50, younger if African-American or have other risk factors for the disease.

Family History: The risk of prostate cancer is higher than average if a man's close relative (such as his father or brother) has the disease.

Race/Ethnicity: Prostate cancer is more common in African American men than in white men, including Hispanic white men. It is less common in Asian and American Indian men. African-American men are 2.5 times more likely to die from the disease.

Diet: Some studies suggest that men who eat a diet high in animal fat or meat may be at increased risk of prostate cancer. Men who eat a diet rich in fruits and vegetables may have a lower risk.

Other: Men who have abnormal cells lining the internal and external surfaces of the prostate gland (a condition known as *prostatic intraepithelial neoplasia*) may have an increased risk of prostate cancer.

Screening/Early Detection

Prostate-specific antigen (PSA) and digital rectal exam (DRE) are the methods used to screen for prostate cancer. However, they are only screening tools and do not give a definite diagnosis of prostate cancer. Talk to your doctor or a healthcare professional so that you can make an informed decision.

Sources:

National Prostate Cancer Coalition
www.pcccoalition.org
National Cancer Institute
www.cancer.gov/cancertopics/types/prostate
American Cancer Society
www.cancer.org



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