

From The desk of Julie Frutiger Parish Nurse



FACTS ABOUT PROSTATE CANCER

Approximately 30,000 men in the U.S. die each year from prostate cancer.

Prostate cancer can be cured if detected early, but early stage prostate cancer usually has no symptoms.

As you get older, your risk of prostate cancer increases. After age 50, your chance of having prostate cancer increases substantially. The majority of prostate cancers are found in men age 65 or older.

For reasons not well understood, African American men have the world's highest rate of prostate cancer...up to 50% higher than the average American man.

If a close family member--brother or father--was diagnosed with prostate cancer before age 65, your risk is greater than the average American man and if several of your close relatives have had prostate cancer at an early age, your risk is considered very high.

A high-fat diet and obesity may increase your risk of prostate cancer.

Prostate cancer screening and the PSA test can help identify cancer early on, when treatment is most effective. A normal PSA test, combined with a digital rectal exam, can help reassure you that it's unlikely you have prostate cancer. But getting a PSA test may not be necessary for some men, especially men 75 and older.

Professional organizations vary in their recommendations you should and should not get a PSA screening test, but most encourage screening in men between the ages of 40 and 75, and in men with increased risk of prostate cancer. The decision should ultimately be made after discussing it with your doctor and considering your risk factors.

What is PSA?

Prostate-specific antigen (PSA) is a protein produced by both cancerous and noncancerous prostate tissue. A small amount of PSA normally enters the bloodstream. Prostate cancer cells usually make more PSA than noncancerous cells, causing PSA levels to rise in your blood. PSA levels can also be elevated in men with inflamed or enlarged prostate glands, so your doctor is needed to evaluate your blood level.

Your doctor takes the PSA into consideration along with your age, the size of your prostate gland, how quickly your PSA levels are changing and whether you are taking medications that may affect your PSA reading.

The digital rectal exam is also an important part of prostate cancer screening because your doctor can also check for signs of rectal cancer and help decrease the chance of missing prostate cancer or wrongly identifying a noncancerous prostate abnormality as cancer.

With that information in mind, please be aware of a free prostate cancer screening available. The Rudy Quijas Annual Prostate Cancer Screening is available this September. Rudy Quijas was the founder of the local Rudy Tacos restaurants. He died from prostate cancer at a very young age. His family hosts a golf tournament in his memory and the proceeds from the tournament are used to help fund this screenings.

The prostate screening dates are:

Tuesday, September 10th in the Cancer Center at Trinity Moline
Thursday, September 12th at Trinity Bettendorf.

Screening appointments are necessary and available between 6pm and 8:30 pm both evenings.

To make an appointment, call 309-779-2485 or 779-2486.

To be eligible for an appointment, you must:

Be age 55-70... If there is a family history of prostate cancer or if you are African American, the ages are 40-70.

Have no personal history of prostate cancer.

Not currently under the care of a urologist.

The screening is free of charge and includes an exam and PSA blood test. The results are mailed directly to the screening participant and it is up to you to share the results with your physician.

Sources: mayoclinic.com
menshealthnetwork.org