

Prostate Cancer and Functional Health Literacy

**Satellite Conference and Live Webcast
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Faculty

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Why Is Health Literacy Important to Prostate Cancer?

- **In layman's terms**
 - **Treating prostate cancer involves many decisions between a man and his health care team**
 - **Significant others are potentially affected**
 - **Terms used are confusing and embarrassing**

Why Is Health Literacy Important to Prostate Cancer?

- **It is difficult to determine how aggressive the cancer will be**
- **It is difficult to know how long the man will live with the cancer**
 - **Will he die with the cancer or will he die from the cancer**

Why Is Health Literacy Important to Prostate Cancer?

- **Wide spread screening is controversial**
 - **Medical experts who encourage regular screening believe current scientific evidence shows that finding and treating prostate cancer early, when treatment might be more effective, may save lives**

Why Is Health Literacy Important to Prostate Cancer?

- **They recommend that all men who have a life expectancy of at least 10 years should be offered the PSA test and DRE annually beginning at age 50**

Why Is Health Literacy Important to Prostate Cancer?

- They also recommend offering screening tests earlier to African-American men, and men who have a father or brother with prostate cancer
- <http://www.cdc.gov/cancer/dcpc/publications/prostate.htm>

Why Is Health Literacy Important to Prostate Cancer?

- Medical experts who do not recommend regular screening want convincing evidence that finding early-stage prostate cancer, and treating it, saves lives

Why Is Health Literacy Important to Prostate Cancer?

- They believe some of these cancers may never affect a man's health and treating them could cause temporary or long-lasting side effects like impotence (inability to keep an erection) and incontinence (inability to control the urine flow, resulting in leakage or dribbling)

Why Is Health Literacy Important to Prostate Cancer?

- Since they believe it is unclear if the potential benefits of screening outweigh the known side effects of treatment, they recommend that all men be given information on the pros and cons of screening before making their own screening decision
- <http://www.cdc.gov/cancer/dcpc/publications/prostate.htm>

Decisions Men and Their Families Face After Screening

- Screening and biopsy
 - A prostate cancer screening may reveal results that prompt a doctor to recommend a biopsy
 - There are many other supplementary tests and considerations that can help a man who is undergoing screening decide if a biopsy is necessary, including

Decisions Men and Their Families Face After Screening

- Lower vs. higher free PSA test
- PSA velocity (rate of rise over time)
- PSA density (PSA per volume of prostate)
- Family history
- Ethnicity

Decisions Men and Their Families Face After Screening

- Prior biopsy findings
- Digital rectal exam results
- Different forms of PSA
 - bPSA, pro-PSA

Decisions Men and Their Families Face After Screening

- In general, a lower free PSA (percentage) indicates a higher risk of finding cancer at biopsy, as does a higher PSA velocity and PSA density

After Biopsy, Decisions Become More Complicated

- Treatment or surveillance
- Active surveillance
 - Also called “watchful waiting” and “expectant management”

After Biopsy, Decisions Become More Complicated

- Refers to a strategy of forgoing immediate treatment after a diagnosis of prostate cancer in favor of regularly scheduled testing and clinical exams to closely monitor the disease

After Biopsy, Decisions Become More Complicated

- National Comprehensive Cancer Network (NCCN), a not-for-profit alliance of leading cancer centers
 - Updated guidelines from an NCCN panel urges clinicians to offer active surveillance to their patients whose prostate cancers are at low risk of progressing to life-threatening disease

After Biopsy, Decisions Become More Complicated

- Treatment
 - Radical prostatectomy
 - Robotic prostatectomy
 - All forms of radiation therapy
 - Hormonal therapy