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## Comprehensive Cancer Information for Patients, Families and Medical Professionals Printed from CancerHelp®

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CancerHelp™ is not intended, nor should it be used to make medical recommendations. It is intended merely to provide information that may help you and your licensed physician make decisions about your care. Information is kept current through monthly updates.

### Prevention of Prostate Cancer      02/03

-- Overview of Prevention --

-- Prevention --

Doctors can not always explain why one person gets cancer and another does not. However, scientists have studied general patterns of cancer in the population to learn what things around us and what things we do in our lives may increase our chance of developing cancer.

Anything that increases a person's chance of developing a disease is called a risk factor; anything that decreases a person's chance of developing a disease is called a protective factor. Some of the risk factors for cancer can be avoided, but many can not. For example, although you can choose to quit smoking, you can not choose which genes you have inherited from your parents. Both smoking and inheriting specific genes could be

considered risk factors for certain kinds of cancer, but only smoking can be avoided. Prevention means avoiding the risk factors and increasing the protective factors that can be controlled so that the chance of developing cancer decreases.

Although many risk factors can be avoided, it is important to keep in mind that avoiding risk factors does not guarantee that you will not get cancer. Also, most people with a particular risk factor for cancer do not actually get the disease. Some people are more sensitive than others to factors that can cause cancer. Talk to your doctor about methods of preventing cancer that might be effective for you.

-- Purposes of this summary --

The purposes of this summary on prostate cancer prevention are to:

- \* give information on prostate cancer and how often it occurs
- \* describe prostate cancer prevention methods
- \* give current facts about which men or groups of men would most likely be helped by following prostate cancer prevention methods

You can talk to your doctor or health care professional about cancer prevention methods and whether these methods would be likely to help you.

-- Prostate Cancer Prevention --

The prostate is a gland in males that is involved in the production of semen. It is located between the bladder and the rectum. The normal prostate gland is the size of a walnut and surrounds the urethra, the tube that carries urine from the bladder.

-- Significance of prostate cancer --

Prostate cancer is the most common nonskin cancer among men in the United States. Although the number of men with this disease is large, the number of men who are expected to die of the disease is considerably smaller, since the majority of men diagnosed with prostate cancer do not die of it.

-- Prostate cancer prevention --

Prostate cancer can sometimes be associated with known risk factors for the disease. Many risk factors are modifiable though not all can be avoided.

**Age:** The risk of developing prostate cancer increases as a man gets older.

**Chemoprevention:** Chemoprevention is the use of specific natural or man-made drugs, vitamins, or other agents to reverse, suppress, or prevent cancer growth. Several agents, including difluoromethylornithine (DFMO), isoflavonoids, selenium, vitamins D and E, and lycopene have shown potential benefit in studies. Further studies are needed to confirm this.

**Diet and Lifestyle:** A diet high in fat, especially animal fat, may be associated with an increased risk of prostate cancer. Increased dietary intake of fruits and vegetables has been associated with a reduced risk of prostate cancer in some studies.

**Hormonal Prevention:** Studies are underway to discover the role of certain drugs, such as finasteride, that reduce the amount of male hormone as preventive agents for prostate cancer.

**Race:** The risk of prostate cancer is dramatically higher among blacks, intermediate among whites, and lowest among native Japanese. However, this increase in risk may be due to other factors associated with race. Studies have shown a link between levels of testosterone and prostate cancer risk, with black men having the highest levels.

-- To Learn More --

## Call

For more information, U.S. residents may call the National Cancer Institute's (NCI's) Cancer Information Service toll-free at 1-800-4-CANCER (1-800-422-6237) Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Deaf and hard-of-hearing callers with TTY equipment may call 1-800-332-8615. The call is free and a trained Cancer Information Specialist is available to answer your questions.

## Web sites and Organizations

The NCI's Cancer.gov Web site provides online access to information on cancer, clinical trials, and other Web sites and organizations that offer support and resources for cancer patients and their families. There are also many other places where people can get materials and information about cancer treatment and services. Local hospitals may have information on local and regional agencies that offer information about finances, getting to and from treatment, receiving care at home, and dealing with problems associated with cancer treatment.

## Publications

The NCI has booklets and other materials for patients, health professionals, and the public. These publications discuss types of cancer, methods of cancer treatment, coping with cancer, and clinical trials. Some publications provide information on tests for cancer, cancer causes and prevention, cancer statistics, and NCI research activities. NCI materials on these and other topics may be ordered online or printed directly from the NCI Publications Locator. These materials can also be ordered by telephone from the Cancer Information Service toll-free at 1-800-4-CANCER (1-800-422-6237), TTY at 1-800-332-8615.

## LiveHelp

The NCI's LiveHelp service, a program available on several of the Institute's Web sites, provides Internet users with the ability to chat online

with an Information Specialist. The service is available from 9:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. Eastern time, Monday through Friday. Information Specialists can help Internet users find information on NCI Web sites and answer questions about cancer.

Write

For more information from the NCI, please write to this address:

- \* NCI Public Inquiries Office
- \* Suite 3036A
- \* 6116 Executive Boulevard, MSC8322
- \* Bethesda, MD 20892-8322

-- About PDQ --

PDQ is a comprehensive cancer database available on Cancer.gov.

PDQ is the National Cancer Institute's (NCI's) comprehensive cancer information database. Most of the information contained in PDQ is available online at Cancer.gov, the NCI's Web site. PDQ is provided as a service of the NCI. The NCI is part of the National Institutes of Health, the federal government's focal point for biomedical research.

PDQ contains cancer information summaries.

The PDQ database contains summaries of the latest published information on cancer prevention, detection, genetics, treatment, supportive care, and complementary and alternative medicine. Most summaries are available in two versions. The health professional versions provide detailed information written in technical language. The patient versions are written in easy-to-understand, nontechnical language. Both versions provide current and accurate cancer information.

The PDQ cancer information summaries are developed by cancer experts and reviewed regularly.

Editorial Boards made up of experts in oncology and related specialties are responsible for writing and maintaining the cancer information summaries. The summaries are reviewed regularly and changes are made as new information becomes available. The date on each summary ("Date Last Modified") indicates the time of the most recent change.

PDQ also contains information on clinical trials.

People who are at high risk for a certain type of cancer may want to take part in a clinical trial. A clinical trial is a study to answer a scientific question, such as whether a certain drug or nutrient can prevent cancer. Trials are based on past studies and what has been learned in the laboratory. Each trial answers certain scientific questions in order to find new and better ways to help cancer patients and those who are at risk for cancer. During prevention clinical trials, information is collected about prevention methods, the risks involved, and how well they do or do not work. If a clinical trial shows that a new method is better than one currently being used, the new method may become "standard."

Listings of clinical trials are included in PDQ and are available online at Cancer.gov. Descriptions of the trials are available in health professional and patient versions. Many cancer doctors who take part in clinical trials are also listed in PDQ. For more information, call the Cancer Information Service 1-800-4-CANCER (1-800-422-6237); TTY at 1-800-332-8615.

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