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Prostate Cancer: Prevention and Alternative Treatments Research

While Prostate Cancer will effect one in six men there are measures that can be taken to reduce the risk and possibly slow the disease progression Things such as eating well staying physically active and seeing the doctor regularly.

Eating Well:

High fat diets have been linked to prostate cancer. Limiting the intake of high fat foods and emphasizing fruits vegetables and whole fibers may help reduce the risk of prostate cancer as well as a host of other conditions. Soy products contain isoflavones that seem to keep testosterone in check. Prostate cancer feeds off of testosterone. Vitamin E has showed promise in reducing the risk of prostate cancer in smokers. Research in the benefits of vitamin E is still going on.

Regular exercise:

Regular exercise can help prevent a heart attack or conditions such as hypertension and high cholesterol. However when it comes to cancer the data is not as clear-cut. But studies do indicate that regular exercise may reduce the cancer risk.

Exercise has been shown to strengthen the immune system improve circulation and sped digestion all of which may play a role in cancer prevention. Obesity is another potential risk factor for some cancers.

Regular exercise may also minimize the symptoms and reduce the risk of prostate gland enlargement or benign prostatic hyperplasia (BPH). Men who are physically active usually have less severe symptoms than men who get little exercise do

Drug protection:

Research of prostate cancer prevention has shown that the drug finasteride (Proscar, Propecia) can prevent or delay the onset of prostate cancer in men 55 and older. The drug is used to control prostate gland enlargement and hair loss in men However finasteride also has been shown to contribute to increasing sexual side effects and to slightly raise the risk of

developing a higher grade prostate cancer At this time the drug is not routinely recommended to prevent prostate cancer. It can be useful in someone who is at a higher risk of developing prostate cancer

Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) might help prevent prostate cancer. These drugs include Advil Motrin ibuprofen. Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs inhibit an enzyme called COX2, which is found in prostate cancer cells. More studies are needed at this time to confirm this finding. NSAIDs in some individuals can cause increased gastrointestinal side effects.

Alternative medicine:

A range of dietary supplements and herbal medicines are offering new ways to prevent or treat prostate disease and cancer in general. Do they work? Some do show some promise and are slowly being accepted into mainstream medicine. However the benefits and risks of many products and practices remain unproven. The production of these products is not well regulated and the amount of the active ingredient may vary from bottle to bottle.

Herbal products marketed to relieve command prostate problems such as frequent urination or a weak urine flow include African plum tree, African wild potato, pumpkin, rye grass, These taken in small to moderate amts appear to be safe but they have not been studied in large long term trials to confirm their safety or effectiveness.

Saw Palmetto:

An exception to the above is the herb saw palmetto. Unlike the herbal supplements it has been widely tested and the results do show promise. It is important to note that saw palmetto has been recommended to treat the symptoms of prostate enlargement not prostate cancer.

Saw palmetto is thought to work by preventing testosterone from breaking down into another form of the hormone associated with prostate tissue growth. Some research indicates that saw palmetto can be as effective in reducing the size of an enlarged prostate as Proscar. It does appear that saw palmetto may have fewer side effects.

One drawback of this herb and many other such herbal products is that it may suppress the PSA levels in the blood. This action can interfere with the effectiveness of the PSA test.

A few herbal and dietary products claim to help cure or prevent cancer. In most cases there is no scientific evidence that these products work. Two popular cancer fight supplements include Chaparral, which comes from a desert shrub found in the southwestern US and Mexico. Research has shown that the herb does not effectively treat cancer and can lead to irreversible liver failure.

Shark cartilage contains a protein that has some ability to inhibit the formation of new blood vessels within tumors in sharks. Shark cartilage therapy is based on the theory that capsules containing shark cartilage will do the same in human. These benefits have not yet been shown in humans.

Research is ongoing with many studies involving prevention treatment drug therapy. Because of the findings of this research surgical treatment and radiation treatment has become more

effective and more effective drugs are being developed to treat Prostate Cancer. Genetic Testing and the use of adult stem cells are being studied. Duke University is conducting a study at this time looking into the use of ultrasound waves to kill cancer cells in small to moderate sized prostate glands As diagnosis and treatment continues to improve the life carriers will continue to very slowly improve their mortality assessments.

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