

Better than PSA?

(From the Newsletter of Prostate Research Campaign UK)

The search for a test that is better than the PSA test for detecting prostate cancers is hotting up.

A new blood test may provide a much more effective way of detecting early prostate cancer. Researchers at St Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore found that the test for a blood protein called EPCA, early prostate cancer antigen, can spot the disease with a 94% accuracy rate. This promising result, albeit with a relatively low number of patients, is a lot better than one would expect from the PSA test.

Yet another line of research is based on a recently discovered gene PCA3 that has been shown to be over-expressed only in malignant prostate tissue. The company developing the new blood test has evaluated it amongst over 400 men and found it to be significantly more accurate than what is currently achievable with PSA screening.

The widespread use of the PSA test has led to increased tumour detection rates, particularly among those at early stages of the disease. This has led to a clinical dilemma, since standard analysis of biopsy samples often cannot distinguish which tumours are going to spread and which are not. Many men live for years with slow-growing prostate tumours before they die of unrelated causes and treating such patients could cause more harm than good. So finding a better way to determine which patients need aggressive treatment and which can try active surveillance has become a major challenge.

All these new approaches show promise but all are some considerable way from clinical use. Prostate Research Cancer UK will continue to update on progress made.

Christmas Meal

Any one wishing to attend the xmas meal this year should see Alan Morris at the support group meetings. The cost this year is £11 and will be on the 12th December before the meeting at 12 noon at the Connaught Hotel. Please note that the meeting on this day will therefore commence at 2pm.



Wolverhampton Prostate Cancer Support Group

Newsletter Autumn 2005

This is the third annual newsletter for the Wolverhampton Prostate Cancer Support Group and a huge thank you for all your continued support and interest. Meetings will continue to take place at the Connaught Hotel, Tettenhall Road, Wolverhampton, every 6-7 weeks on a Monday afternoon from 1.30pm – 3.30pm.

Latest news on waiting times for Prostate Cancer Reducing waiting times for cancer patients is one of the highest priorities for the NHS in the coming year. From the end of December 2005, the NHS should achieve:

A maximum 31 day wait from decision to treat to first treatment for all cancers.

A maximum 62 day wait from urgent GP referral to first treatment for all cancers.

All patients treated from 31st December 2005 onwards must be treated within these operational standards. This means that patients urgently referred by their GP should be treated within 62 days.

Honorary Fellowship for Charles

Congratulations to Charles Sammonds who late last year received an Honorary Fellowship from the University of Wolverhampton Business School in recognition of his long and dedicated service to the University. All of you who are regular attenders at the support group meetings will know Charles who has been a colourful and valued member of the group since the launch of the support group.

Before he began his career at the University of Wolverhampton, Charles was in military Intelligence, then the Intelligence Corps and finally served with the Royal Artillery up until 1948.

Joining the University when it was still a polytechnic in 1967 as Deputy Head of the Management Centre at Himley Hall, Charles went on to become Principal Lecturer in Management in 1973. He became Head of Postgraduate and Professional Studies at the Business School in 1989 and retired in 1991. Charles developed the foundations for one of the first Polytechnics MBA qualifications and led the evolution of postgraduate management courses in the Education and Public Sectors. After his retirement, he became a visiting lecturer on strategic studies to Exeter University.



Help for needy children

Alan Morris has been very busy this summer helping to build a playground for under-privileged children in Romania. Alan who chairs the support group meetings travelled with three other men to Romania in June for two weeks where they helped to build a playground in the city of Galati for homeless and poor children. This project took place in conjunction with the PCF Romania charity. The volunteers represent different churches from Wolverhampton including Dunstall Baptist Church and Perton.



Survey to help cancer patients

Wolverhampton prostate cancer sufferers are being asked to take part in a survey to find out their experiences of NHS care. The charity aims to find out the true experiences of the 30,000 men who are diagnosed with prostate cancer in the UK each year.

John Neate, chief executive of the Prostate Cancer Charity, said "I appeal to men in Wolverhampton with Prostate Cancer to take part in this survey and help us find out how men with Prostate Cancer are treated by the NHS".

If you have been diagnosed with prostate cancer since April 2003 or know someone who would like to help ring 0208 222 7680 or log on to www.prostate-cancer.org.uk

New Programme for 2005/2006

Here is the new programme for next years meetings. If there are any subjects of particular interest to you that do not appear on the programme then please let Clare Peterson know.

Monday 24th October 2005	Chemotherapy for Prostate Cancer (Mr Waymont) RAFFLE
Monday 12th December 2005	Diagnosis & Management of Prostate Cancer (Mr Inglis)
Monday 23rd January 2006	Hormone therapy (Mr Philp) RAFFLE
Monday 6th March 2006	Cancer genetics (Lucy Burgess)
Monday 24th April 2006	Laposcopic Prostatectomy (Mr Cooke) RAFFLE
Monday 5th June 2006	Prostate function and erectile dysfunction (Conrad Warren/Jenny Gould)
Monday 17th July 2006	Regaining control-what you can do to help yourself (Ann Peters) RAFFLE
Monday 4th September 2006	Diet & Prostate Cancer
Monday 30th October 2006	Developments in the management of Prostate Cancer (Mr Waymont) RAFFLE
Monday 11th December 2006	Radiotherapy for Prostate Cancer (Dr Samanci)

The Tales of Aynuk at New Cross

Thank you to Norman Holt for sharing his very personal experiences of his prostate cancer and treatment. Norman has compiled a collection of highly amusing poems which are available in full on request to Clare Peterson. Norman would like to thank all the staff who work in Urology for the brilliant way in which they have looked after him. He says "I have always been treated with kindness, skill and dignity. This and my wicked sense of humour has helped me come to term with the situation and face up to what else is in store for me".

A Bostin Bloke (by Norman Holt)

Owd Aynuk he were bostin,
Ay anner peed for weeks
His eyes they were bulging,
And so were all four cheeks!

So in he came to New Cross,
To sort the problem out,
And got fitted out double quick,
With a leak proof spout.

Young doctor he was brilliant,
As anyone could see
His words of comfort cheered our lad,
With, "It'll hurt you more than it hurts me!"

So if you are here in same situation
Don't worry or get depressed.
When cameras up yer bum
Smile, the staff will do the rest.

Be like me have a sense of fun
Do not lose your humour.
Let us hope when they get inside,
It ain't a bloody tumour.

If they have plans to take mine out,
I'll use it as a conker.
Go on ask my wife, what its like,
To be married to a plonker.