PROSTATE CANCER

- The prostate is a small organ that is part of the male reproductive system
- It produces prostatic fluid, part of semen
- Prostates commonly enlarge over the course of a man’s life – this can lead to a condition call benign prostatic hyperplasia (BPH)
- Prostate cancer is most common cancer in men
- It is also the 2nd deadliest cancer in men but…
- It also can not cause any symptoms or difficulty during a man’s life

HOW DO I KNOW IF I HAVE PROSTATE CANCER?

- Prostate cancer can be difficult to recognize since it can look like other less serious conditions
- Things to mention to your doctor include:
  - Difficulty urinating
  - Weaker urine stream
  - Stopping and starting when urinating
  - Blood in the urine or semen
  - Pelvic discomfort
  - Family history of prostate cancer

RISK FACTORS AND PREVENTION

Risk factors for prostate cancer include:

- Age
- Family history of prostate cancer
- African-American race
- Obesity
- Smoking

WHAT CAN I DO TO PREVENT IT?

It is not known exactly what causes prostate cancer and most of the risk factors above cannot be changed but there are things that might help prevent prostate cancer that you can do:

- 9 or more servings of fruits and vegetables per day
- **Exercise**: even small changes in activity can lead to weight loss! Ideally, 30 minutes several times per week to help your heart, your lungs, and your prostate!
- **Quit Smoking** can help your health in a number of ways and your doctor can help!
WHAT IS A PSA TEST
Prostate Specific Antigen or PSA is a chemical that a man’s prostate makes that ends up in the blood stream.

Certain diseases elevate the level of PSA in your blood.

- Benign Prostatic Hyperplasia (BPH)
- Prostate cancer
- Prostatitis (inflammation or infection of your prostate)

There is debate among doctors about whether to test men without any symptoms for elevated PSA

- It could catch prostate cancer earlier when there is better chance of treatment and recovery

BUT

- Not all + PSA tests indicate cancer
- Not every prostate cancer will cause problems during a man’s life

SO... WHO SHOULD GET TESTED?
The United States Preventative Services Task Force analyzes the research for screening tests like the PSA

They are going to release a new recommendation which says that, regardless of race or family history,

Men 55-70 years old should talk to their doctors about risks and benefits of prostate cancer screening

WHAT IF MY PSA TEST IS POSITIVE?
A positive PSA should be followed-up. Depending on the situation you may be asked to:

- Repeat the test in several months to see if it changes
- See a urologist (specialist in the urinary/male reproductive system including prostates)
- Undergo a biopsy of your prostate

RISKS AND BENEFITS OF BIOPSY
As with all procedures there are risks and benefits of undergoing a prostate biopsy. Your doctor will talk to you more about these risks and benefits but they include:

- It may catch prostate cancer early in the disease or reassure you that you don’t have cancer

BUT

- There’s a small chance of infection, urinary incontinence, and difficulty obtaining erection

TO LEARN MORE:

Talk to your doctor TODAY!

and you can visit these websites for more information:

→ UVM Health
→ Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center
  http://cancer.dartmouth.edu/prostate/gu-about-prostate.html
→ National Cancer Institute
  https://www.cancer.gov/types/prostate
→ American Cancer Society