



What You Should Know About Male Cancers

Many men are uncomfortable discussing their genitals and prostate, even at the cost of their own well-being. But for cancers that happen only in men, watching for symptoms and talking to your doctor can mean the difference between life and death.

Prostate cancer

One man in 6 will be diagnosed with prostate cancer during his lifetime. Although prostate cancer is the second-leading cause of cancer-related death among men in the United States, the chance of surviving prostate cancer is nearly 100% if it is found early.

You are more likely to get prostate cancer as you get older, especially after age 50 years. African-American men and men with a family history of prostate cancer have a higher risk of developing the disease.

Finding prostate cancer early can be difficult because it usually doesn't have any symptoms. That's why it is important to see your doctor for regular examination and testing. However, any of the following symptoms may be a sign of prostate disease:

- Frequent urination
- Painful or burning sensation during urination
- Difficulty starting or stopping urine flow
- Weak or interrupted urine flow
- Persistent pain or stiffness in your lower back, hips, or upper thighs

M. D. Anderson recommends that beginning at age 50—or at age 45 for African-American men and men with a family history of prostate cancer—men be screened every year for prostate cancer. Prostate cancer screening is done with a digital rectum exam, a prostate-specific antigen test, or both. During a digital rectum exam, the doctor inserts a gloved, lubricated finger into the rectum and feels the prostate

for lumps, enlargement, or anything else that seems unusual. A prostate-specific antigen test is a simple blood test that can help a doctor decide if further action is needed. It is always a good idea to talk to your doctor about the risks, benefits, and limitations of prostate cancer screening.

Testicular cancer

Only about 1 in 300 men will develop testicular cancer during his lifetime. Testicular cancer is the most common cancer in men between the ages of 20 and 34 years. Although there is no formal screening for it, testicular cancer may be discovered during a routine physical examination. The best way to detect testicular cancer early is to know what is “normal” for your testicles. Look at and feel your testicles at least once a month, and see your doctor if you experience any of the following for more than 2 weeks:

- A small, hard, often painless lump on a testicle
- A feeling of heaviness in the scrotum
- A dull ache in the lower abdomen or groin
- A sudden collection of fluid in the scrotum
- Pain or discomfort in a testicle or in the scrotum

Men with a family history of testicular cancer have a higher risk of developing the disease, and those who have already had cancer in one testicle are more likely to get it in the other testicle. White men are 5 to 10 times more likely to develop testicular cancer than men of any other race. Men with undescended testicles—even if surgery was done to correct this—are also at a higher risk, and so are men whose testicles did not develop normally and men who have Klinefelter's syndrome (a disorder that causes low levels of male hormones).

Penile cancer

Cancer of the penis is very rare; it affects only about 1 in 100,000 men each year in the United States. Penile



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cancer is most common in men ages 50 to 70 years. Symptoms of penile cancer may include:

- A rash-like redness on the penis
- A lump on the penis
- A wart-like growth or lesion on the penis
- An open sore on the penis that does not heal

These symptoms may not mean that you have penile cancer, but you should still see a doctor about them as soon as possible. There is no formal screening for penile cancer.

Men who were not circumcised at birth may be at a greater risk of developing penile cancer. Human papillomavirus (HPV) infection may increase the risk of developing penile cancer. Other risk factors for penile cancer include having phimosis (a condition in which the foreskin of the penis is difficult to pull back from the head), having poor genital hygiene, having many sexual partners, and using tobacco products. ●

For more information, talk to your physician, or:

- call askMDAnderson at 1-877-632-6789
- visit www.mdanderson.org
- visit the National Cancer Institute online at www.cancer.gov or the American Cancer Society online at www.cancer.org.

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