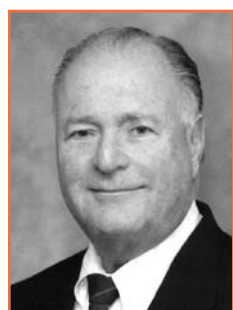


## Prostate Cancer

Prostate Cancer is one of the most common cancers found in American men and the second leading cause of cancer death in men. This year in the United States nearly 250,000 men will be diagnosed with prostate cancer and more than 30,000 men will die from it.

Usually, prostate cancer is very slow growing, and most men die with prostate cancer and not from prostate cancer. Early prostate cancer is localized to the gland, and the majority of patients with localized prostate cancer have a long life expectancy after diagnosis.

The chance of getting prostate cancer increases as a man gets older. The average age at diagnosis is 65 and the lifetime risk of developing symptomatic prostate cancer for a 50-year old male is about 10 percent. African-American men have a 30 to 50 percent higher risk of developing prostate cancer and are twice as likely to die of the disease as are Caucasian males. Ge-



**Donald Comiter, M.D.**

netic factors play a role, particularly for families in whom the diagnosis is made in men under 60 and rises with the number of close relatives who have the disease.

Prostate cancer usually does not cause symptoms for many years. By the time symptoms occur it may have spread beyond the prostate. These symptoms include:

- ▲ Frequent urination, especially at night
- ▲ Inability to urinate
- ▲ Trouble starting or holding back urination
- ▲ Painful urination
- ▲ Blood in the urine
- ▲ Frequent pain or stiffness in the lower back, hips, or upper thighs.

*These symptoms may also be caused by less serious health problems such as an infection or an enlarged prostate. A man with these symptoms should see a doctor who can perform blood tests and other examinations to help determine their cause.*

There are two tests commonly used to detect prostate cancer in the absence of symptoms. One is the digital rectal exam and the other is a blood test used to detect a prostatic specific antigen (PSA). These tests can detect many silent prostate cancers that have not caused symptoms. If the results of the digital rectal exam are abnormal, or if the levels of PSA in the blood are high, your doctor may do further testing to confirm whether or not you have prostate cancer.

Because it is not clear what causes prostate cancer there is no guarantee of prevention. However, it is possible that you can reduce your risk for many types of cancer by not smoking, eating a low-fat high-fiber diet, eating less red meat and more fruits, vegetables and grains. Tomatoes, pink grapefruit and watermelon are rich in substances called lycopenes that help prevent damage to DNA and may help lower the risk of prostate cancer. Exercise regularly and maintain a healthy weight.

*Dr. Donald Comiter is a urologist on staff at North Broward Medical Center, located on Sample Road and I-95 in Deerfield Beach. North Broward Medical Center offers a full array of services including the Neurological Institute, Comprehensive Cancer Center, Orthopedics, Inpatient and Outpatient Rehabilitation, CT/MRI Imaging Center and much more. For more information please call the Health Line at 954-759-7400.*

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