

Main information on prostate cancer

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Definition (Signs, Symptoms and Complications) and Etiology of Prostate Cancer

Prostate cancer is a common cancer that occurs in males. The cancer begins in the prostate gland which is only found in males and it is when the cells in that gland begin to grow, which will form a tumor. That type of cancer is called adenocarcinomas. It is always more than likely one with prostate cancer will have adenocarcinoma. There are other types of prostate cancers such as sarcomas, neuroendocrine tumors, and small cell carcinomas. However, those types of cancers are very rare (What is Prostate?, 2018).

In the early stages of prostate cancer there may be no signs or symptoms that show you may have that cancer. Unfortunately, the tumor grows very slowly and it doesn't push against anything to cause pain. You would have no idea that something is wrong until years later. It is more in the advanced stages that you will show some symptoms. Some of those symptoms that can occur are trouble or pain when urinating, blood in the urine or semen, bone pain, painful ejaculation, and erectile dysfunction to name a few (So what are the warning, 2018). It doesn't always mean you have prostate cancer with the above symptoms, so it is always best to have a testing done.

The complication of prostate cancer or any cancer is that it may spread or metastasize. It can spread to other areas of the body. Once the cancer spreads to the bones it can cause a lot of pain and weakness in the bones. The cancer would unlikely be cured (Prostate Cancer, 2018).

The cause of prostate cancer is not known. The cancer begins when cells in the prostate become abnormal. The cells continue to grow and divide faster

than normal cells do. The abnormal cells will continue to live while the normal cells die. The abnormal cells will continue to accumulate until a tumor is formed and will invade nearby tissue. The abnormal cells can break off and spread to other areas of the body (Prostate Cancer, 2018).

Demographics

According to the American Cancer Society, “ the estimates for prostate cancer in the United States for 2018 are about 164, 690 new cases and about 29, 430 deaths from the cancer”. Prostate cancer is 73% more likely to be seen in African-American men versus Caucasian men and they are almost 2. 4 times likely to die from the disease. Age is one of the biggest factors, the older you are your chances of getting prostate cancer are greater (What Are The Risk Factors?, 2018). According to the Prostate Cancer Foundation, “ 1 in 10, 000 under the age of 40 will be diagnosed with prostate cancer, 1 in 39 ages 40-59, and 1 in 14 ages 60-69”.

Medical Treatment Including Diagnosis

When prostate cancer is first diagnosed there are four major treatment options available which include observation, Active Surveillance, surgery, and radiation.

Other nonstandard treatments include cryotherapy, primary Hormone therapy, and high-intensity focused ultrasound. Choosing the right treatment is based on age, the stage, the general health of the male, and evaluating the benefits and risk factors of each option. Choosing between surgery and radiation would be whether side effects are an issue or quality of life is what matters (Prostate Cancer Treatment, 2018).

The initial screening is done by doing a digital rectal exam and a blood test that detects prostate specific antigens (PSA). If these tests are abnormal then a biopsy would be done to confirm (About Prostate Cancer, 2018). In diagnosing prostate cancer it is usually done through biopsies which are usually relied upon a transrectal ultrasound (TRUS). This ultrasound creates black and white images of the prostate using sound waves to detect where to retrieve samples from. There are other new approaches, but they are still being studied to see if the results are promising (What's New in Prostate, 2018).

Other Therapies and What Do They Address

Physical therapists identifies with cancer. Their role is to improve physical activity. There is a strong relationship that patients' with lower levels of physical activity and higher cancer mortality (Movement for Health, 2010).

Physical therapy addresses general fatigue, pelvic pain, and weak pelvic with conditioning and special exercises to help in all areas.

Behavioral therapy helps with bladder control strategies, which includes learning to actively use your muscles to prevent leakage. It helps with pelvic floor muscle training in learning which muscles to squeeze and strengthen to close the urethra. In order to help with incontinence, behavioral therapy alone is not effective without incorporating electric stimulation of pelvic muscles and biofeedback. Some physical therapy practices offer this behavioral therapy as part of their program (Therapies Ease Incontinence, 2011).

OT Assessment and Treatment

Some of the assessments that could be used are the MOHO Screening Tool, Brief Fatigue Inventory, Pain Assessment Scale, Activity Measure for Post-Acute Care, the Canadian Occupational Performance Measure, and a general assessment of ADLs and IADLs (Braveman, Hunter, Nicholson, Arbesma & Lieberman, 2017). All these assessments measure different things about a person and help to create their occupational profile so interventions can be applied. A patient who had a stem cell transplant (SCT) should be assessed every visit before therapy begins due to serious medical problems could occur. Blood pressure, pulse, hemoglobin, hematocrit, platelets, and white blood cells should all be checked (Braveman, Hunter, Nicholson, Arbesma & Lieberman, 2017).

Functional skills are important for recovery in cancer patients. They include reducing psychological distress and roles and routines of daily living, long term health and promote returning to work. Occupational therapy practitioners bring a holistic approach through meaningful daily occupations to cancer survivors. Occupational performance impairments can result from lymphedema and they vary from minor to significant changes in daily activities (Baxter, Newman, Longpre & Polo, 2017). Lower extremity lymphedema could occur with prostate and various other cancers. “Lymphedema is an abnormal collection of high-protein fluid just beneath the skin” (Baxter, Newman, Longpre & Polo, 2017, p3).

Other treatments include education on cancer care and survivorship. “Regardless of cancer survivors’ stage of recovery occupational therapy offers

a unique level of functioning and participation in daily living, including self-management across the cancer care continuum” (Baxter, Newman, Longpre & Polo, 2017, p4). Energy conservation strategies, strategies to help reduce anxiety and depression, sexual dysfunction, fatigue, functional skills, and education and problem solving on pain are other treatments done by occupational therapist.