What is prostate cancer?

Cancer is a disease that causes cells in the body to divide and grow out of control. When cancer starts in the tissue of the prostate gland, it is called prostate cancer. Cancer cells in the prostate may grow into surrounding tissues or spread to other parts of the body. All men are at risk for prostate cancer.

Risk factors

- Older age: about 97% of all prostate cancer cases are diagnosed in men after the age of 50 years
- Black Race: Black men have higher prostate cancer incidence rates than any other race or ethnicity
- Family history of prostate cancer

Signs and symptoms

- Early stage prostate cancer usually has no symptoms. Early stage means the cancer is confined to the prostate (local stage).
- Men with more advanced prostate cancer may experience:
  - Difficulty in starting urination; weak or interrupted flow of urine
  - Difficulty in emptying the bladder completely
  - Pain or burning during urination
  - Blood in the urine or semen
  - Frequent urination, especially at night
  - Pain in the back, hips, or pelvis that doesn’t go away

Early detection

- The American Cancer Society recommends that physicians discuss the benefits and limitations of PSA screening with men beginning at age 50 or earlier for high risk men. Doing so will allow you the opportunity to make an informed decision about screening.

Prostate cancer facts in South Carolina

- Prostate cancer is the most commonly diagnosed cancer and second most common cause of cancer death among men in South Carolina and the U.S.. One in six men will be diagnosed with prostate cancer during their life time.
Incidence (rate of new cases; 2009-2013):

- Prostate cancer incidence is higher in South Carolina compared to the U.S. (129.3 vs. 123.6 new cases per 100,000 men, respectively).²,³
- Figure 1 displays prostate cancer incidence rates in South Carolina’s 46 counties.² Marlboro (197.6/100,000), Lee (190.2/100,000), and Marion (184.5/100,000) counties have the highest incidence rates for prostate cancer.²
- Prostate cancer incidence rates among blacks are about 1.9 times higher than that for whites (198.3 and 107.3 per 100,000 men, respectively) (Figure 4).²

Mortality 2009-2013:

- Prostate cancer mortality rates are higher in South Carolina when compared to the U.S. (24.2 vs. 20.7 deaths per 100,000 men).²,⁴
- Figure 2 displays prostate cancer mortality rates in South Carolina’s 46 counties.² Barnwell (58.2/100,000), Williamsburg (50.3/100,000), and Hampton (49.0/100,000) counties have the highest mortality rates for prostate cancer.²
- Prostate cancer mortality rate is about 2.7 times higher in blacks than whites (50.1 and 18.4 per 100,000 men, respectively) (Figure 5).²

Survival:

- Nationally, the five-year relative survival rate for prostate cancer is 100 percent when diagnosed at the early stage.¹
- In South Carolina, approximately seventy-nine percent of prostate cancer patients are diagnosed with early stage disease.²
- In South Carolina, the percentage of cases diagnosed with early stage disease is essentially the same for white and black men (Figure 6).²
Figure 3 displays the percentage of prostate cancer diagnosed at early stage in South Carolina’s 46 counties. Bamberg, Abbeville, and Sumter counties have the highest percentage of prostate cancer diagnosis at early stage.

Prostate cancer screening:

- According to 2014 South Carolina Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System data (BRFSS), 46% of men in South Carolina who were 40 years and older had a PSA screening test in the past two years (U.S. average = 43%).

- Prostate cancer screening rates with a PSA test were lower among men with less education and lower income levels. White (48.0%) men reported higher use of PSA screening in the past two years than black men (45.2%) (Figure 7).

Economic burden:

- Primary diagnoses of prostate cancer for inpatient hospitalizations cost more than $45.3 million dollars in South Carolina during 2014:
  - Inpatient hospitalizations: 919 men
  - Average length of stay: 2.4 days
  - Average charge per stay: $49,239.

Racial differences:
Figure 6. Prostate Cancer Cases Diagnosed at Early Stage by Race, SC 2009-2013

Figure 7. Prevalence of PSA Test within last 2 years of Men Aged 40+ by Race, SC 2014

2 South Carolina Central Cancer Registry, Office of Public Health Statistics and Information Services, based on combined data from 2009-2013.
7 South Carolina Revenue and Fiscal Affairs Office, Hospital Discharge Patient-Level Dataset.

For more information on cancer prevention and management, please contact:
American Cancer Society: www.cancer.org | 1.800.227.2345

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