

## The Hard Questions to Ask

are sometimes difficult to find answers to

Questions about sexuality are for many the hardest to talk to others about. Sometimes it can even be difficult to talk to our doctors or partners. Left unanswered bigger problems can develop in our relationships and in the way we feel about ourselves.

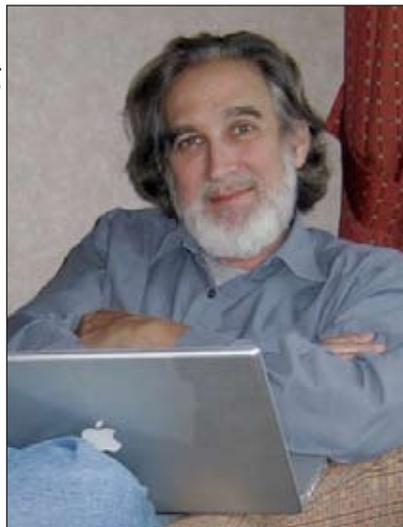
How then do we get the answers we need?

We bring the answers to you. Prostate Cancer Canada Network Calgary is starting off the New Year by bringing in experts in the fields of human sexuality and prostate cancer. These presentations will be at our January and February monthly meetings held the second tuesday of each month.

For our Tuesday, January 10th meeting we bring to you Dr. Richard Wassersug, leading scientist and professor. Dr. Wassersug will be making two presentations both from his latest research.

Dr. Wassersug's first presentation will be based on his project titled *Helping Prostate Cancer Patients and their Partners Overcome the Detrimental Effects of Androgen Deprivation Therapy*. This starts at 6:00pm to coincide with the Warriors meeting, but all are welcome to attend.

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Dr. Richard Wassersug

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- The Hard Questions to Ask
- Details on our January 10th meeting
- In the news, read the current prostate cancer headlines
- New Car Pool program to our monthly meetings
- About Androgen Deprivation Therapy and the Affects on Patients and Partners
- Full schedule of upcoming events and meetings

### Monthly Meeting

Our next monthly meeting will be held at 7:30 PM  
Tuesday January 10th, 2012  
We meet at  
**Venu1008**  
**1008 14 Street SE**  
**in Inglewood**

### Rediscovering Sex After Prostate Cancer

**For Men and Their Partners**

Join us for a special presentation on Rediscovering Sex After Prostate Cancer, presented by Dr. Richard Wassersug.

This is certainly not a talk to miss. Sexuality will be discussed in a very frank and straightforward manner. Men, be sure to bring your partner if possible.

## Jason's Notes

Happy New Year to you.

Looking back at the past year I am astounded at how fast the year went, but also at how much was accomplished.

New groups were started to expand our outreach and service. New meeting formats were tested, with the best formats and content made part of our regular delivery.

We saw a significant increase in new members; men and women looking for answers, help, and a place to share with others.

Our summer automobile Show & Shine experienced outstanding growth and is assured continued success.

This newsletter also has grown at the request from our members to include even more news.

Now, here is the part where I tell you how all this was made possible.

It was because of you.

By you and your peers attending the monthly meetings, freely giving feedback, and through generous donations we have been able to do the work we are here for. To do the work our members have asked of us and hopefully work that adds value and meaning to your life as much as it does ours.

This is your year for health and happiness. Join us at our next meeting and let us know what would help and benefit you most this year.

As you know our next meeting is January 10th. I look forward to seeing you there.



Jason Bedard

Executive Director

Prostate Cancer Canada Network Calgary



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# In The News

## Tomato Juice May Reduce Damaging Side Effects of Treatment for Prostate Cancer Patients

November 3, 2011 - AICR

Tomato juice reduces damaging inflammation in patients undergoing radiation therapy for prostate cancer, according to a new study presented during the 2011 AICR Annual Research Conference.

AICR's expert report and its updates have found that foods containing lycopene reduce the risk of prostate cancer. Lycopene is an antioxidant compound found in tomatoes, tomato products, and other red fruits such as watermelon and red guavas.

The authors of the study wanted to see what effects lycopene might have on reducing the harmful side effects of radiation therapy for prostate cancer.

The study involved 17 patients undergoing radiation treatment for prostate cancer.

Twelve of the patients consumed from 4 to 12 ounces of tomato juice daily throughout their treatment. The duration of treatments ranged from 5 to 8 weeks.

At the end of treatment, participants who drank the tomato juice had decreased levels of several markers of inflammation, including C-reactive protein and interleukin-6, when compared to the five patients who did not drink tomato juice.

This is a small study and the findings would need to be replicated, notes the study's lead author Mridul Datta, PhD, MS, RD, Post-doctoral Fellow at Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center.

"Due to the small number of patients in the intervention groups, we could not distinguish between the benefits of consuming different amounts of tomato juice," Datta noted.

Tomato juice has many compounds in it well studied for its protection against inflammation. It's possible these compounds worked together to protect against damaging inflammation, she said.

"The synergistic effects of whole foods cannot

be replicated through supplements," explained Datta. "Rather than giving patients more pills, we wanted to focus on a food-based therapy."

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## Important news about Vitamin E and prostate cancer

December 6, 2011

It was recently published in the Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA) that the "SELECT Trial" for prostate cancer prevention with oral Vitamin E and selenium supplementation, alone or In combination, compared to placebo, was negative i.e. there was no benefit with the supplements in terms of prostate cancer prevention. In fact, more cases of prostate cancer were diagnosed in the group receiving Vitamin E alone compared to the control group receiving placebo alone, or in the groups receiving selenium alone, or selenium plus Vitamin E. These results are both a disappointment and a surprise. An explanation and some general comments on clinical trial and nutritional supplements for "prevention" of prostate cancer are warranted.

The rationale of the trial was solid. There is evidence that anti-oxidants (such as Vitamin E) help to reduce the risk of certain cancers. Vitamin E and Selenium have both been shown in earlier studies to suggest a decrease in the risk of prostate cancer and thus were chosen to be tested in a population-based randomized trial involving over 35,000 men in the U.S. and Canada (there were 15- 20 Canadian sites). The study was terminated early because of the concern that oral supplementation with vitamin E increased the risk of prostate cancer in healthy men which was confirmed in a subsequent report of longer participant follow-up. This information from a well-designed and well-conducted study is sending out several important messages.

1. This study was based on a hypothesis. To support or refute the hypothesis is precisely

the reason why clinical trials are needed and why volunteer subjects are required to carefully evaluate any indications or claims of beneficial effects from certain drugs or treatments.

2. The results of the clinical trial may or may not confirm the results of preliminary trials and as such researchers and subjects/patients need to recognize this when participating in a clinical trial.
3. Unquestioned premature adoption of a novel treatment based on unsubstantiated claims may be harmful.
4. Contrary to popular belief, vitamins and “natural substances” may be harmful and do exactly the opposite to what is expected regardless as to whether they are consumed under medical supervision or not.
5. The benefits of a substance are often dose related and may be harmful when taken at a higher dose. In the SELECT trial, the daily dose (400 IU or 267 mg) of Vitamin E supplement was several times higher than what had been suggested by previous trials to be beneficial.

Researchers are also pointing out there are many other factors which interact with and influence the effects of any given treatment on different individuals, resulting in different outcomes. For instance, the effects of vitamin E on individuals may depend on their genetic makeup and whether they smoke or not.

Many valuable lessons (see above) can be learned from the SELECT trial. The most important message from this trial is that we need to continue doing well designed, randomized, controlled clinical trials, to test and validate new ideas and discoveries in the ongoing quest for new approaches to the prevention and management of prostate cancer.

Additional Information pertaining to vitamin E and prostate cancer:

In the SELECT trial, the men taking high doses of Vitamin E were at a higher risk of

prostate cancer. In the group of men who took only the placebo pills, after seven years, 65 prostate cancer cases were diagnosed for every 1,000 men. For the men who took Vitamin E only, for every 1,000 men, there were 76 cases of prostate cancer diagnosed (11 additional cases of prostate cancer for every 1,000 men over seven years). In other words, if 1,000 healthy men not taking Vitamin E similar to those in the SELECT study were followed with annual physician visits, 65 of them would be expected to be diagnosed with prostate cancer over a seven year period. If these same men took 400 I.U. Vitamin E daily for 5.5 years, 76 of the 1000 would be expected to be diagnosed with prostate cancer over a seven year period (i.e., 11 additional cases over seven years).

Based on the results of the SELECT trial, men taking high doses of vitamin E supplements should speak with their doctor about the risks and benefits of vitamin E intake and also initiate monitoring for possible prostate cancer.

The dose used in the SELECT trial was 400 I.U. (International Units) (equivalent to 267 mg of alpha-tocopherol). The recommended dietary allowance (RDA) by the Food and Nutrition Board at the Institute of Medicine of the U.S. National Academies is only 15 mg of alpha-tocopherol.

The average dietary intakes of vitamin E among healthy adults are probably higher than the RDA and thus supplementation is generally not necessary. A dose much higher than the RDA may in fact be harmful.

**Written by Dr. Joseph Chin, O.Ont., M.D.,  
FRCS(C), Executive Member, Scientific  
and Medical Advisory Committee Chair,  
Patient & Public Education Committee,  
Prostate Cancer Canada**

The above news excerpts are for  
informational purposes only.

Please always speak to your Doctor about all your  
concerns and questions related to your health.

## Continued from page 1

The main presentation follows during our regular monthly meeting schedule, starting at 7:30pm the same evening, same room. Dr. Wassersug will talk about *Rediscovering Sex After Prostate Cancer Treatment*. This is certainly not a talk to miss. Sexuality will be discussed in a very frank and straight forward manner.

Dr. Wassersug has asked that men bring their partners if possible to the meeting as both will benefit greater if both are present. If you or your partner have questions feel free to write them down at home before the meeting and drop them in a question box we will have at the door. For those with nerves of steel you will be most welcome to ask Dr. Wassersug any questions directly. Nothing will embarrass him.

For our February 14th meeting we have a special panel of experts to speak on and answer questions on Sex and Intimacy. This meeting conveniently happens to fall on Valentine's Day. Your questions can be as wide ranging and direct as you like. As with our January meeting it is recommended that men bring their partners.

Be sure to read the February issue of the Digital Examiner for a complete lineup of who will be on the panel.

The goal with these meetings is to get your questions answered clearly with no discomfort on your part. You will not be forced to read your questions or to do anything you find uncomfortable.

Sexuality and intimacy can be different after prostate cancer, but this is also true in general as we age. These talks will without doubt re-energise your batteries and hopefully spark some fires. 

Below: Fresco from Pompeii, Italy



## Car Pool to Meetings

Numerous comments and suggestions have led us to the idea of organizing car pooling to our regular monthly meetings.

We really like the idea as a number of members are unable to attend monthly meetings often due to night time driving concerns.



If you are interested in volunteering to drive someone in your neighbourhood, or if you are interested in receiving a ride, please contact Jason.

Email: [Jason.Bedard@pccncalgary.org](mailto:Jason.Bedard@pccncalgary.org)

Phone: 403-455-1916

## About Androgen Deprivation Therapy and the Affects on Patients and Partners

When primary therapies for prostate cancer (PCa) fail, patients are offered androgen deprivation therapy (ADT) via a surgical orchiectomy or chemical castration. Some 40,000 PCa patients per year in North America begin ADT, which reduces testosterone to negligible levels. Presently, approximately a half a million men in North America are on ADT to treat PCa. The side effects of ADT are clinically identical whether achieved chemically or surgically: e.g., weight gained as fat, loss of lean muscle mass, genital shrinkage, loss of body hair, reduced libido and impotence. The loss of libido and erectile dysfunction commonly lead to distress in both the patients and their partners.

If you are on ADT you should attend our meeting on January 10th, 6:00pm. Complete meeting details on page 6.

## Upcoming Events

### 2nd Tuesday - January 10th

#### 5:00pm - Pre-meeting Dinner Get-together

**Salt & Pepper Restaurant - 1413 9th Avenue SE**

Join fellow members for a pre-meeting social time, good food and drink at the Salt & Pepper Restaurante Mexicano. The restaurant is only a very short walk from Venu1008 where we hold our monthly meeting.

#### 6:00pm - PCCN Calgary Warriors

**Venue1008 - 1008 - 14Street SE**

For those men and their families dealing with advanced prostate cancer we have the Calgary Warriors. The Warriors are a caring and compassionate group, well organized and full of information. The Warriors serve the very important needs of hormone refractory and all those who have an interest in management of advanced prostate cancer.

#### 6:00pm - PCCN - ADT Presentation

**Venue1008 - 1008 - 14Street SE**

Men who are on Androgen Deprivation Therapy (ADT) will benefit greatly from a special presentation called *Helping Prostate Cancer Patients and their Partners Overcome the Detrimental Effects of Androgen Deprivation Therapy*. Presented by Dr. Richard Wassersug, this talk will provide detail and information not readily found in books or doctors offices.

#### 6:30pm - Active Surveillance Group

**Venue1008 - 1008 - 14Street SE**

Men under active surveillance often have a whole set of questions and fears often not well addressed. This group will give men the opportunity to learn from others who chose the same course for managing their prostate cancer. If you are under active surveillance, or if you are deciding on treatment and active surveillance is an option, this group is for you.

#### 7:30pm - Our January Monthly Meeting

**Venu1008 - 1008 – 14 Street SE**

#### Rediscovering Sex After Prostate Cancer

Join us for a special presentation on rediscovering sex after prostate cancer, presented by Dr. Richard Wassersug. This is certainly not a talk to miss. Sexuality will be discussed in a very frank and straight forward manner. Men, be sure to bring your partner if possible.

### Neighbourhood Social Groups

Last month we started a pilot program for small groups of our members to meet throughout the city over lunch or breakfast.

Two meetings have been established. The purpose of these meeting is to give our members the opportunity to meet and socialize outside of our regular monthly meetings. This is a great way to better know fellow members and meet others. Please feel free to attend either or both of the upcoming meetings.

Beverages and snacks provided.

#### Thursday January 26th - 11:30am

#### Thornccliffe/Greenview Social Group

Denny's Restaurant

5015 4 Street NE

(McKnight Blvd and Edmonton Trail)

#### Thursday January 19th - 8:00am

#### Bonavista Social Group

Ricky's All Day Grill Restaurant

606-12101 Lake Fraser Drive SE

(Avenida Shopping Centre)

#### GETCHECKED.CA

The ManVan™ is a valuable resource offered by the Prostate Cancer Centre to provide on-site free baseline PSA blood tests for men over 40. The Man Van™ makes appearances at select events, but can also be found around the community each month. For the current schedule please visit [GETCHECKED.CA](http://GETCHECKED.CA)

