



# The Digital Examiner

[www.ProstaidCalgary.org](http://www.ProstaidCalgary.org)

Hello PROSTAID Calgary members and friends.



July 2019

Number 238

## Meeting Schedule Tuesday July 9, 2019

Monthly meetings are hosted at The Kerby Centre, 1133 7th Ave SW.

7:30-9:00PM

### General Meeting Room 205 (Lecture Room)

#### Video Presentation:

PCRI's Executive Director, Mark Scholz, MD, discusses the off-label use of Metformin as a treatment for prostate cancer.

Excerpt from the 2019 Prostate Cancer Patient Conference, conference moderator Mark Moyad, MD, MPH gives practical advice about choosing and maintaining a diet that supports your prostate health.

#### PLUS

Dave Lunn reviews PROSTAID Calgary's website.

### Support Group Meetings

6:30-7:20pm

**Warriors**  
Advanced & Recurrent Disease Facilitator: Frank Altin  
Room 208 (2nd Floor)

6:30-7:20pm

**Wives, Partners & Caregivers**  
Room 205 (Lecture Room)  
No facilitator this month.

**Newly Diagnosed**  
No facilitator this month.

**The Kerby Centre** is located at 1133 7th Ave SW. Parking is FREE in lots on both sides of 7th Ave. The WEST LRT conveniently stops at the front doors of the Kerby Centre. General Meetings are open to the public and free to attend. A light snack is served. Ladies, family members, and caregivers are always welcome!

PROSTAID Calgary wishes you all a safe and enjoyable Stampede experience. Here's hoping for clear skies and warm weather at the Greatest Outdoor Show in Earth! Yahoo!!

*Have you been out to Wild Wednesday yet? It's the friendliest cruise night in town showcasing Calgary's finest wheels!*

PROSTAID Calgary is honoured to partner again with Wild Wednesday Cruise Nights. This year, the event is being hosted at the A&W Restaurant located at 80 Crowfoot Way NW in Crowfoot Crossing. There's easy access from Stoney Trail, Crowchild Trail, Nose Hill Drive and John Laurie.

PROSTAID Calgary volunteers will be on location every Wednesday night all season long. Come check out the great cars and don't miss the 50/50 Raffle. With room for 200 vehicles, there's something for everyone. We hope you'll join us!

Michener Allen Auctioneering is hosting their 20th Annual Classic & Collector Auction on Saturday July 27 and PROSTAID Calgary will be on location with Dark Side Racing to Fire Up for prostate cancer awareness. Michener Allen is located at 13090 Barlow Trail NE.

PROSTAID Calgary is supported by the community and exists for the community. [Click here to reach our On Line Donation Page on Canada Helps.](#)

If a donation is meaningful to you, it's meaningful to us.

Warm wishes,  
*Kelly Fedorowich,*

Executive Director, 403-455-1916

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**Warriors**

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**Wives, Partners & Caregivers**

Volunteer Facilitator Needed

**Newly Diagnosed**

Volunteer Facilitator Needed

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**PROSTAID Calgary**

Proud member of the Prostate Cancer Canada Network of support groups



**Apalutamide:  
New drug helps extend survival rate of men  
with advanced prostate cancer**

A new drug has helped reduce the risk of death by 33 per cent in men with prostate cancer that has spread, according to the results of an international trial led by the B.C. Cancer Agency's Dr. Kim Chi.

The double-blind study on the androgen receptor inhibitor drug called Apalutamide was conducted in 23 countries at 260 cancer centres. It involved 1,052 men whose median age was 68. The study was sponsored by Janssen, the drug company who makes Apalutamide.

At two years, those taking the treatment drug in addition to their standard treatment had a 52 per cent lower risk of cancer spread or death.

The findings of the TITAN (Targeted Investigational Treatment Analysis of Novel Anti-androgen) trial which began in 2015 are published in the New England Journal of Medicine (NEJM). Results were also recently presented by Chi at the annual meeting of the American Society of Clinical Oncology.

Chi, an oncologist, said overall survival rate is only about five years once prostate cancer has spread beyond the prostate so new treatments are desperately needed. The percentage of patients who took the drug whose cancer did not spread was 68.2 per cent, but in the placebo group the proportion was 47.5 per cent. There was a 33 per cent reduction in the risk of death for those who took the drug.

After about two years, 82 per cent of men in the investigational drug group were alive compared to 74 per cent on placebo. Men in both groups also took standard male hormone deprivation therapy showing that combination therapy helps to improve survival. Male hormones (androgens) like testosterone feed prostate tumours and currently, men with metastatic cancer are put on hormone deprivation treatment that has been the standard of care for many decades. Apalutamide, also called Erleada, is said to more completely block male hormones.

Chi said the drug is "not toxic" and there were no significant differences in the proportion of study participants in the intervention or placebo groups who experienced side effects, but skin rashes were just over

three times more common in the drug group.

The drug has already been approved in Canada for certain patients with hormone-resistant, non-metastatic cancer but Chi said now that it is showing benefit for patients whose cancer has spread, he expects the drug will be approved by Health Canada for those patients as well, perhaps later this year. After that approval, provinces will have to decide on whether to expand funding for the drug, which costs about \$3,000 a month. Chi said he expects more Canadian patients will have access to it next year.

"This is a next generation, better-designed androgen inhibitor and we really need better drugs for those with metastatic prostate cancer," Chi said. "There's a critical need to improve outcomes for these patients and this study suggests this treatment can prolong survival and delay the spread of the disease."

*The Vancouver Sun, Written by Pamela Fayerman*

**Prostate cancer researchers find molecular  
switch to prolong survival**

Wilmot Cancer Institute at the University of Rochester Cancer Center scientists believe they have figured out why a commonly used drug to treat late-stage prostate cancer often stops working after four or five months and appears to have a dual function that later turns the cancer into a relentless aggressor.

By describing how the drug, enzalutamide, inadvertently causes the harmful transformation, corresponding author Chawnshang Chang, Ph.D., and colleagues believe they have also discovered a way to block it from occurring, at least in mice. The study, led by Jie Luo, a graduate student from the Department of Biology at the University of Rochester, was published in the journal Nature Communications.

"As more patients look to enzalutamide to extend their lives, even for just a few months, our goal is to find ways to make the drug work for longer periods and to block the dangerous pathways that lead to adverse side effects," Chang said.

Prostate cancer is the second leading cause of cancer death in American men. Although some early-stage types, with a low Gleason score, can be treated with a "watch and wait" (active surveillance) approach, other types are higher-grade cancers that require surgery and androgen

deprivation therapy (ADT). The goal of this treatment is to lower the amount of male sex hormones (androgens) in the body, which fuel the cancer. An especially aggressive subtype of the disease is known as castration-resistant prostate cancer, which keeps growing despite ADT treatment.

For men who have this aggressive form of metastatic prostate cancer and are no longer responding to chemotherapy, enzalutamide can extend survival by an average of five months. In 2018 the Food and Drug Administration also approved the drug to treat men who have castrate-resistant prostate cancer that had not yet spread.

But enzalutamide, a pill, can cause side effects. One of the worst effects is neuroendocrine differentiation (NED), an increase of neuroendocrine cells in the prostate tumors. An abundance of NED cells makes tumors resistant to treatment.

Earlier, scientists believed that only a tiny percentage of advanced prostate cancer tumors underwent neuroendocrine differentiation. But recent studies estimate that 30 to 40 percent of patients have tumors containing aggressive neuroendocrine prostate cancer cells for which the average survival rate after detection is less than one year—making more patients vulnerable to the worst-case disease progression, Chang said.

Edward Messing, M.D., a national and international authority in urologic cancers who treats patients at Wilmslow and UR Medicine, said the latest discovery has the potential to impact men with challenging cases.

"Dr. Chang's team has identified an important molecular mechanism that affects many of the thousands of men with advanced prostate cancer who will eventually succumb to their disease," Messing said. "Understanding and reversing the 'switch' that causes neuroendocrine differentiation should prolong the lives of these men and significantly reduce their suffering."

Although no treatments are available yet in clinical trials to block the molecular switch, Chang's lab identified a small molecule drug that appears to work in mice; researchers elsewhere have revealed similar drugs, and further study is needed.

*By University of Rochester Medical Center.*

*Article has been abridged. [Click here to read in its entirety.](#)*

## 9/11 Dust, First Responders' Prostate Cancers Linked?

A possible link between World Trade Center dust and prostate cancer in first responders has been found by researchers.

Exposure to dust at the New York City site after the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks triggered chronic inflammation in the responders' prostates, which may have contributed to their cancer, according to the Mount Sinai Health researchers.

They noted that inflammation has long been considered an important factor in prostate cancer.

"Several years ago, I saw a first responder in his 40s who began having symptoms of prostatitis, a painful condition that involves inflammation of the prostate, soon after exposure to the World Trade Center dust," said researcher Dr. William Oh, chief of the division of hematology and medical oncology at Mount Sinai's Icahn School of Medicine.

"He ultimately developed a high-grade prostate cancer several years later. It suggested to me that there might be a link between his exposure and cancer, but I knew that I would need to examine it systematically," Oh said in a Mount Sinai news release.

The study included data from first responders and rats exposed to WTC dust. The researchers said it's the first study to examine men who were exposed to WTC dust and later developed prostate cancer.

Prostate cancer tissues from the first responders and the rats showed immune cell increases that indicate inflammation.

The findings suggest that chronic prostate inflammation in the first responders began after exposure to the World Trade Center dust, and that the inflammation may have contributed to prostate cancer. But the study did not prove that the dust caused prostate cancer.

This study and further research into the expression of genes and pathways in other patients with environmental exposure-caused prostate inflammation could lead to



clinical trials of anti-inflammatory or immune-targeted therapies, according to the researchers.

"World Trade Center responders show an overall increase in cancer incidence, and specifically of certain cancer types such as prostate cancer," said researcher Dr. Emanuela Taioli, director of the Institute for Translational Epidemiology at Mount Sinai.

"It is important to address the reasons why this is happening in order to prevent new cases in this aging cohort. Our findings represent the first link between exposure to World Trade Center dust and prostate cancer," Taioli explained.

The dust samples used in the study are unique because they are the only existing samples taken on Sept. 11, 2001. All other WTC dust samples were collected after a significant storm three days after the attack. The study was published in the June issue of Molecular Cancer Research.

**WebMD, By Robert Preidt**

### **If I Were Tom Survey**

The UBC Men's Health Research program led by Dr. John Olliffe launched a new survey on the If I Were Tom Website (an interactive prostate cancer support resource) around mental health among men with prostate cancer.

[Click here to take the survey and enter a draw to win \\$500!](#)

#### **Tom is Not Alone**

In Canada, 1 in 7 men are diagnosed with prostate cancer. But the good news is that 96% of men are alive five years after their prostate cancer diagnosis. By doing your research, building a plan, and sticking to it, your odds get even better.

**Www.IfIWereTom.com**

This website can get you started down that path. The videos all cover a different part of the process. After watching each one you'll see related resources and tips that will help you choose your next steps.

### **ADT Educational Program Upcoming Dates**

**July 17th and August 20th, at 3:00 p.m. Pacific time.**

The ADT Online Educational Program is a free resource for prostate cancer patients in Canada who have recently started or who are about to start hormone therapy. The program is as much for the partners of patients as it is for the patients themselves.

— Class structure: A single, 1.5 hour online, interactive, facilitated class using the GoToMeeting platform. Canadian attendees receive a free copy of the 2018 book: "Androgen Deprivation Therapy: An Essential Guide for Prostate Cancer Patients and Their Loved Ones"

— To register: Fill in the brief form on the home page at [www.LifeOnADT.com](http://www.LifeOnADT.com) or send an email [LifeOnADT@gmail.com](mailto:LifeOnADT@gmail.com).

Data shows that the program—i.e., the 1.5 hour class plus the book—can increase patients' self-efficacy in managing ADT side effects. But it is most helpful if taken early, before most ADT side effects emerge!

### **Michener Allen Auctioneering 20th Annual Classic & Collector Auction Volunteer Call Out**

Date: Saturday July 27

Volunteers are needed to help sell tickets for the 50/50 Raffle, hand out PROSTAID Calgary brochures and promotional material, and help raise awareness to prostate cancer and the programs and initiatives offered by PROSTAID Calgary. No experience needed. Please contact Kelly if you'd like to be part of the Volunteer Team: [info@prostaidecalgary.org](mailto:info@prostaidecalgary.org)

#### **Thank you to our Sponsors and Community Partners**

