



November & December Edition

You have all likely seen the major controversy that Dr. Otis Brawley, Chief Medical Officer, American Cancer Society provoked when he publicly questioned the merits of PSA testing. His comments were unfortunate because they now introduce uncertainty for some men about whether they should be tested. The American Urological Association recommends that the PSA test and digital rectal exam be offered to well-informed men, aged 40 years or older, who have a life expectancy of at least 10 years. The real question should be how to use the PSA data to produce the best patient outcome and avoid over-treatment. The debate should not be about whether to get tested.

The American Cancer Society was an early and lengthy backer of PSA testing. If they now follow Dr. Brawley's apparent focus on fewer cancers and a de-emphasis on prostate cancer it may be necessary for the prostate cancer community to find alternative venues to reach men in need. The Prostate Cancer Foundation and the Prostate Cancer Research Institute are two organizations that are clearly dedicated to helping prostate cancer patients.

If you have any suggestions for how this communication can be most effective for the men and their families in your area please contact Terry Kungel, tkungel@hughes.net or by phone, 207-443-4300 and 617-449-8522.

Conference Attendance

Jim and Mona Ervin attended the 5th Annual Meeting of the NATIONAL ALLIANCE OF STATE PROSTATE CANCER COALITIONS "NASPCC", which was held October 8-10 in Chicago. Mona is the Chair of the Maine Coalition Board and also the National Secretary of NASPCC. Delegates from over thirty states attended the meeting. The purposes of the organization are to encourage and promote the development of state prostate cancer coalitions nationwide; to be a collective voice for state prostate cancer

coalitions on a national basis; to be a clearing house of on-going best practices; and to support and encourage state prostate cancer organizations in their efforts involving prostate cancer education, awareness and treatment. The NASPCC seeks to establish the Alliance as a recognized national network for state prostate cancer organizations; to make clinical trials a priority in prostate cancer communities; to achieve increased funding for prostate cancer research; and to reduce health disparities and improve access to care in high risk, medically underserved communities.

Doctor Alan Partin from Johns Hopkins Brady Urological Institute addressed the group. The title of his presentation was “Novel and Potentially Useful Urine, Tissue, and Blood Bio-Markers for Prostate Cancer Detection”. Dr. Partin discussed the 18-year interval from the time of the PSA discovery to its use as an identifier of prostate cancer. He cautioned about rushing into use of new markers until thorough studies have been completed. One new marker being studied is the serum ProPSA Test that is on the “fast track” and will soon be sent to the FDA. Next he discussed the blood test EPCA – 2. While needing additional testing this test is being used to identify men with organ confined disease from those where the disease has spread outside the gland. Another new marker being studied is the GSTP1 gene. This gene, with a high negative predictive value, shows DNA Methylation Patterns in normal cells versus cancer cells. A new urine test is being developed using the PCA3 molecule. This is a molecular urine assay test that is close to being sent to the FDA. Each of the test markers discussed by Dr. Partin are available in clinical trials. The general impression left by Dr. Partin is that the new markers show great promise in the fight against prostate cancer.

Another key speaker was Tom Kirk, CEO of UsToo. Mr. Kirk identified prostate cancer as an epidemic that is occurring **now**. He discussed the SEA (support, educate, advocate) Blue Program. He also addressed the need for America’s prostate cancer organizations to collaborate.

I attended the annual PROSTATE CANCER RESEARCH INSTITUTE CONFERENCE in Los Angeles, September 11-13. There were two key findings from the many presentations. There appears to be great progress in imaging, specifically color Doppler that will aid physicians and patients in making more informed decisions about disease stage and progression. We also learned the important contribution active exercise and better nutrition can have on our disease. If you would like to look at the full range of the agenda please visit <http://www.prostate-cancer.org/pcricms/node/100>

Calendar of Events

4 November

The Bangor Area Prostate Cancer Support Group will be meeting 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. in the Brown Conference Room, Eastern Maine Medical Center 489 State Street, Bangor, ME 04402. Jon Henry is seeking someone to assist him in serving this community.

6 November

The Eastern Maine Living with Cancer Conference will be meeting at Jeff's Catering, Brewer, ME from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Lunch will be available for \$10.

7-8 November

The Blue Ribbon Leadership Training will be held this weekend at Black Bear Inn, Orono, Maine. It is anticipated that over 30 people will have participated in the two Leadership Training sessions when they are completed. Many of the attendees are committed to supporting and advancing the mission of the Maine Coalition to Fight Prostate Cancer. Some will be starting support groups, others will join us as Advisors or Directors, and still others will assist with new responsibilities and tasks. The participants will be better informed and more able to reach out into their communities to educate them about prostate cancer.

10 November

The South Portland Area Prostate Cancer Support Group will be meeting 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at the Cancer Community Center, 778 Main Street, South Portland, ME 04106.

12 November

The Ellsworth and Hancock County Area Prostate Cancer Support Group will be meeting 5:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. at the Beth C. Wright Cancer Resource Center, 3 High Street Ellsworth, ME 04605.

17 November

Brunswick Area Prostate Cancer Support Group will be meeting 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at Mid Coast Hospital - Medical Office Building, 123 Medical Center Drive, Brunswick, ME 04011. This meeting has been reserved for open discussion and sharing about our individual journeys with prostate cancer. This will be a good meeting for newly diagnosed men and other first-time visitors to attend. The Steering Committee will meet in advance at 5:30 p.m. in The Café at Mid Coast Hospital.

23 November

The Island Falls Area Prostate Cancer Support Group will be meeting 7:00 p.m. at the Fairpoint Communications office, Island Falls, ME.

24 November

The Augusta and Kennebec County Area Prostate Cancer Support Group will be meeting 6:00 p.m. in conference rooms 1, 2, 3, Maine General Medical Center, 6 E. Chestnut Street, Augusta, ME 04330.

25 November

The Lewiston and Androscoggin County Area Prostate Cancer Support Group will be meeting 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. at Central Maine Medical Center, 12 High Street, Lewiston, ME.

2 December

The Bangor Area Prostate Cancer Support Group will be meeting 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. in the Brown Conference Room, Eastern Maine Medical Center 489 State Street, Bangor, ME 04402. Jon Henry is seeking someone to assist him in serving this community.

8 December

The South Portland Area Prostate Cancer Support Group will be meeting 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at the Cancer Community Center, 778 Main Street, South Portland, ME 04106.

10 December

The Ellsworth and Hancock County Area Prostate Cancer Support Group will be meeting 5:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. at the Beth C. Wright Cancer Resource Center, 3 High Street Ellsworth, ME 04605.

15 December

Brunswick Area Prostate Cancer Support Group will be meeting 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at Mid Coast Hospital - Medical Office Building, 123 Medical Center Drive, Brunswick, ME 04011. The discussions at this meeting will focus on how we plan to stay healthy and happy during the holiday season by eating mindfully and staying in touch with our emotions. The final half hour of the meeting will be set aside for sharing holiday cheer. Please bring something to share with others.

28 December

The Island Falls Area Prostate Cancer Support Group will be meeting 7:00 p.m. at the Fairpoint Communications office, Island Falls, ME.

29 December

The Augusta and Kennebec County Area Prostate Cancer Support Group will be meeting 6:00 p.m. in conference rooms 1, 2, 3, Maine General Medical Center, 6 E. Chestnut Street, Augusta, ME 04330.

30 December

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Web Sites

There is a wealth of information at www.mcfpc.org and www.ustoo.org and www.prostatecancerfoundation.org. The panel discussion that was shown on many Maine cable channels during September's Prostate Cancer Awareness Month is now available on the www.mcfpc.org site. There is also good coverage of the Speaker's Bureau. If you would like someone to speak to a group about prostate cancer, please contact us to schedule a speaker.

We can always be reached by email, tkungel@hughes.net or phone, 207-443-4300. Let us know how we can help you and your loved ones!