



NEWS RELEASE

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Early detection is key to living with prostate cancer

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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In 2004, there will be about 230,900 new cases of prostate cancer in the United States, according to the American Cancer Society. It is estimated that 4,850 new cases of prostate cancer will occur in Alabama and 630 men are expected to die from this disease.

Prostate cancer is the most common type of cancer found in American men, other than skin cancer. The cause of prostate cancer is still unknown, but certain risk factors are linked to the disease. While all men are at risk for prostate cancer, these risk factors can increase the chances of a man having the disease. The risk factors listed below are according to the American Cancer Society:

- Age - the chance of getting prostate cancer increases as a man gets older.
- Race - for unknown reasons, prostate cancer is more common among African American men than among white men. African American men are twice as likely to die of the disease.
- Diet - men who eat a lot of red meat or have a diet of high-fat dairy products seem to have a greater chance of getting prostate cancer. These men also tend to eat fewer fruits and vegetables. Doctors are not sure which of these factors causes the risk to increase.
- Exercise - getting enough exercise and keeping a healthy weight may help reduce prostate cancer risk.
- Family history - men with a close family member (father or brother) who has had prostate cancer are more likely to get it themselves, especially if their relatives were young when they got the disease.

The American Cancer Society suggests that men should have a PSA (Prostate Specific Antigen) and DRE (digital rectal examination) beginning at age 50. Men who are at higher risk (African American men or men who have a family member diagnosed with the disease) should be screened by age 45.

"Prostate cancer is curable if detected early. Early detection is the key to living a healthier life," says Dr. Jack Hataway, medical director of the Chronic Disease Prevention Division.

The month of September is recognized as Prostate Cancer Awareness Month. An awareness campaign is taking place in Birmingham, Mobile and Montgomery on area buses. The message for the campaign was developed in cooperation with the Division of Preventive Medicine in the UAB School of Medicine and the National Cancer Institute. The promotion reads "Get the facts

about prostate cancer... and make the decision that is best for you." The ad also contains the National Cancer Institute's 1-800-4-CANCER toll-free number for educational information.

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