



Testing and Early Diagnosis

The Importance of Prostate Cancer Screening

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Thank you for being with us today. My name is Rana McKay, and I'm a GU Medical Oncologist at the University California in San Diego. I'm glad to be talking to you about prostate cancer, and prostate cancer screening, and the importance of early detection. Prostate cancer is actually the most common cancer among men in the United States and it's actually the second leading cause of cancer death in the U.S.. We know that prostate cancer is a common cancer, and it's actually twice as likely to come on in African American men and men of non-white race. Prostate cancer screening is really important. I know there can be some confusion around the recommendations for screening. For those patients that are white-men aged 45 to 75, discussing the benefits of prostate cancer screening with your clinician is super important. Actually, the age for screening is even lower for African-American men, from age 40 to 75. Usually, prostate cancer screening is done via simple blood test, and sometimes may require a biopsy or an mRI to detect prostate cancer. The prostate cancer treatment is not a one-size-fits-all model for everybody. It really changes, based off of a patient's risk, and there are some prostate cancers that don't need to be treated. But certainly, if somebody has a higher-risk cancer, those are the ones that have the potential to impact somebody's life expectancy, in which case there is a huge benefit to screening with regards to benefits from a treatment and mortality standpoint for those high-risk patients. So, critically important to talk about screening with your clinician, with your primary care doctor, the conversation starts there, discussing the pros and cons of treatment. You know, as I said, it's a simple blood test and sometimes there is a rectal exam that's also performed to assess for nodularity within the prostate. I think the benefits of screening include early detection, detection prior to development of metastatic disease, and potential life prolongation. And the cons of screening, of course, are sometimes there can be anxiety associated with cancer detection, there can be additional diagnostic tests that get performed. And as I stated there are some prostate cancers that really don't need to be treated at all and being prudent when things are getting detected to identify those are low-risk that don't need treatment, but those that are high-risk and do warrant treatment. So at the end of the day, it is critically important for each of you to talk to your primary care physicians, and potentially a urologist, about the benefit of prostate cancer screening, and this is certainly a leading health matter in the United States. Thank you for joining us today.