

Industrial Insurance Agency

September 18th, 2012 TIPS FOR TUESDAY TM

Talk to Your Doctor About Early Detection Screenings for Prostate Cancer

Screening tests for prostate cancer may help detect prostate cancer early. The five-year relative survival rate* for prostate cancers found in the early stage is 100 percent. Prostate cancer screenings are especially important because in its early stages, prostate cancer most often produces no symptoms.

Screening tests include the digital rectal exam and the prostate-specific antigen (PSA) blood test. PSA is made by cells in the prostate gland. It is made by both normal cells and cancer cells. A higher level of PSA may indicate that cancer is present.

PSA screening may not be the right choice for everyone. Talk to your doctor about the benefits and risks and make an informed choice.

These early detection tests are used to look for warning signs of prostate cancer. But they can't tell for sure whether cancer is present. If your test results are not normal, you may need a prostate biopsy to find out if you have cancer.

*The five-year relative survival rate compares the number of people who are still alive five years after their cancer was found to the survival of others the same age who don't have cancer.

Sources: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; American Cancer Society. (July 2012)

Lower Your Cholesterol, Lower Your Risk

Millions of Americans have high cholesterol, and it's a condition you shouldn't ignore. High cholesterol increases your risk of heart attack, stroke and other diseases. You can help decrease your risk for these diseases by keeping your cholesterol in check

Some factors that you can't change, like family history, gender and age, can affect how your body deals with cholesterol. The good news is that factors you can change, including diet and lifestyle choices, are also an important part of controlling your cholesterol levels.

A cholesterol level of 240 mg/dl or higher means that your risk for heart disease doubles. Most people with high cholesterol can benefit from lifestyle and behaviors that reduce bad LDL cholesterol and raise good HDL cholesterol levels.

Medications may be needed in some cases. But by changing your weight, dieting, exercising and not smoking, you may be able to lower your cholesterol and protect your

heart, even without medications. If you haven't visited a doctor recently to have your levels checked, you can still benefit from making healthy choices before your next appointment.

Americans tend to eat high-fat diets. Making healthier choices can help you lower LDL (bad) cholesterol levels. Try these tips:

- Cook with polyunsaturated oils like safflower or soybean and monounsaturated oils like olive or canola.
- Avoid foods high in saturated fats, including some cuts of beef, dark-meat poultry, poultry skin, butter and whole-milk dairy products. Switch to skim milk and low- or no-fat cheese, cottage cheese, sour cream and yogurt.
- Read food labels, especially those on chips, cookies and crackers. Many "cholesterol-free" foods are made with unhealthy, highly saturated coconut, palm and palm kernel oils. Avoid packaged foods that include trans-fats or partially hydrogenated oils.
- Trim visible fat from meat. Remove skin from chicken, turkey and duck.
- Choose the leanest cuts of meat: beef eye of round, tenderloin, sirloin, flank steak and pork tenderloin instead of rib eye, prime rib and spareribs.
- Eat at least two meatless meals a week. Try whole-wheat pasta with tomato sauce, bean-based dishes or vegetarian lasagna.
- Eat more fish like salmon and cod to get cholesterol-lowering omega-3 fatty acids.
- Broil, grill, bake, steam or poach foods instead of frying, sautéing, or breading and frying.
- Snack on fruits, carrot sticks, air-popped popcorn, nuts and whole-grain crackers.

Sources: American Heart Association; National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute; National Institutes of Health; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (July 2012)

Watch for Subtle Signs of Ovarian Cancer

Knowing the early warning signs of ovarian cancer may result in a positive outcome from treatment. In fact, if the cancer is caught early and treated in stage one, more than 90 percent of women are either cured or live longer than five years.*

But the symptoms are subtle, and the tumors grow fast. Most women have the signs for only three to nine months before the disease becomes advanced.

Symptoms in the early stages include bellyache, bloating, gas, cramps, appetite loss and incontinence. One clue that it may be cancer is when symptoms do not come and go - they persist and get worse over time.

Doctors encourage women of all ages to heed even mild feelings of distress in the area from the navel to the pubic bone. Those that last more than two weeks warrant a visit to the doctor

However, many women who report early symptoms do not receive the tests needed for fast diagnosis. Doctors may mistake the early signs for other disorders, such as colitis or irritable bowel syndrome. If you think you may have symptoms, be sure to ask your doctor what can be done to rule out ovarian cancer.

Women with family members who have had ovarian or breast cancer are at higher risk.
Talk to your doctor about what you can do to protect yourself from ovarian cancer.

Sources: *American Cancer Society; Mayo Clinic. (July 2012)



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