

MEN'S HEALTH

New Cancer Treatment Provides Hope Ⓣ

(NAPSA)—The 230,000 men who develop prostate cancer every year in the United States may now be able to live longer and lower their chances of cancer progression.

Recently published research, conducted by the Radiation Therapy Oncology Group (RTOG), a clinical research component of the American College of Radiology (ACR), showed that men with advanced stages of prostate cancer who took a common cancer-fighting therapy, called Zoladex® or goserelin, immediately following their course of radiation treatment experienced several benefits, including a 16 percent decrease in disease progression, a 15 percent greater chance of disease-free survival, and a 10 percent greater chance of survival 10 years after therapy.

“Men with advanced prostate cancer often have a poor prognosis, and this new approach to treatment can provide them with more hope for survival and staying cancer-free,” said RTOG researcher, Colleen Lawton, M.D., F.A.C.R., professor of Radiation Oncology at the Medical College of Wisconsin in Milwaukee.

“Goserelin is already used as a prostate cancer treatment, and this long-term study gives physicians a new approach for using the drug along with radiation to extend life and prevent disease progression in men with advanced forms of the disease,” Dr. Lawton said.

Treatment options vary according to a man's age, potential side effects of treatment, and other health conditions. In radiation therapy, high-energy rays are used

to kill cancerous cells. Currently, hormone therapy with drugs such as Zoladex is used before radiation to reduce the size of the prostate. Based on this new study, physicians may now prescribe the drug to men following radiation to prevent disease progression and extend survival. Because it is a hormone, patients taking Zoladex may experience hot flashes, decreased bone mineral density, decreased sexual desire and/or ability to have erections.

Prostate cancer affects the prostate gland, which produces semen. It is the most common major cancer in America, affecting one in six men during their lifetimes and killing 30,000 men each year. The risk of developing prostate cancer increases with age; men who consume a high-fat diet may be at even greater risk. Some studies suggest that eating foods rich in isoflavonoids (found in soy foods), selenium, vitamins D and E, and lycopene (found in tomato-based foods) may reduce prostate cancer risk.

Symptoms of prostate cancer typically do not appear until it is advanced, and may include difficulty or frequency of urination, blood in the urine or bone pain. Because there usually are no early symptoms of prostate cancer, annual screening is very important to detect prostate cancer early when it is most treatable. Prostate cancer screening includes a yearly blood test for prostate specific antigen (PSA) and a physical examination. For more information on screening, visit your family physician or your local hospital.