

PROSTATE CANCER CANADA - NEWMARKET

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**A support group that provides understanding,
hope and information to prostate cancer patients and their families**

While our December 15 meeting will still be our pre Christmas party, we have added a great topic and speaker to start the evening. Gail Sauer practices as a licensed Naturopathic Doctor at the Balanced Living Massage Therapy and Wellness Centre in Markham, ON. In addition, she teaches at Seneca College and regularly lectures at Wellspring Sunnybrook Cancer Support Centre as a primary health care practitioner. After graduating from the University of Guelph (Honours, 1997), Gail worked as a lab technician in Dawson City, Yukon. She did a 4-year, post-graduate Naturopathic Medical program at the Canadian College of Naturopathic Medicine and has completed additional courses at Harvard Medical School. (Mind-Body-Medicine program) Gail has also been a regular attendee at the Princess Margaret Healing Journey program. Her general practice focuses on oncology and chronic care.



Meeting Date: December 15th, 2011

Place: Newmarket Seniors Meeting Place,
474 Davis Drive, Newmarket

Time: 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm

Speaker: Gail Sauer, Naturopathic Doctor

Subject: Complementary and Alternative Medicine
for Prostate Cancer



Prostate Cancer Canada - Newmarket

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a member of the



Assisted by the Canadian Cancer Society
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The Newmarket Prostate Cancer Support Group does not recommend products, treatment modalities, medications, or physicians. All information is, however, freely shared.

It all comes down to good communication between cancer patients and their doctors

Treatment Decision Considerations

Cancer diagnosis often creates anxiety and urgency for patients. The outcomes of possible treatments can have a profound impact on your life, particularly for prostate cancer patients.

Each individual, together with his partner or family, and physician should analyze the emotional and psychological needs in order to feel comfortable with a selected treatment. Rather than adopting a course of action in response to immediate fears, consider the following as you enter the decision-making process.

Don't Rush

Unless there is compelling medical reason to act quickly, take the time to learn about your particular cancer, the risks and possible side effects of various therapies, and the impact they may have on your life. Remember that there is generally time for you to become informed.

Get the facts

Start learning about prostate cancer, what it is, how it acts, what treatments are available.

You will also need to get to know the language generally used in reference to prostate cancer.

Become your own advocate by educating yourself. You will become an advocate for your personal health care.

Form a partnership with your doctor / urologist. This partnership should be mutually supportive, based on candid, honest dialogue. Embarrassment is not an excuse.

Consider a second opinion. Doctors understand getting a second opinion to confirm their diagnosis. In seeking a second opinion, urology, radiology, oncology and general practitioners may offer different perspectives. Each will provide considerations based on your individual situation.

Talk about your cancer, Prostate Cancer is a family affair that affects those closest to you. Talk with your partner and family about your cancer.

Consider a support group, become involved. Support groups provide peers who understand your situation because they've been there themselves. Bring your partner, a family member or a friend along. Ask your doctor if he or she knows the location of any local prostate cancer support groups; they may even be the sponsor of such a group.

Seek the best opinion. It is your responsibility to seek the best choice by investigating the services available through your insurance coverage and health care provider. When you

are ready to make a treatment decision, ask the doctor how many cases like yours she or he has treated.

While first rate treatment is available at many hospitals throughout Canada, many may not be equipped or experienced in all treatments available. Be assured that community hospitals, as well as large regional medical institutions, offer doctors who are experts in your type of cancer.

Maintain good records

Throughout this process you need to maintain good records. It is important to have your medical reports available for review when seeking second opinions. These reports provide a profile of your condition and will help you avoid the need to undergo tests you may have already taken, since the consulting doctor will know in detail what has already been tested.

Don't play doctor

Alternative medicine has many advocates. And while there is much to commend, many of the hypotheses remain unproven. Until more is known about the efficacy of various alternative treatments, consider consulting with your doctor before subscribing to them. Although many complement traditional therapies, such supplements may also interfere with diagnostic tests and treatments.

Continually seek information

Because prostate cancer diagnosis and treatments are undergoing rapid changes, continually seek updated information. Discuss the information, ask questions, and be honest with your doctor and health care team. Patients need information to make decisions. Studies show that most cancer patients want to know everything, even if it is unfavorable, about their diagnosis, prognosis and the benefits and limitations of treatment.

Poor communication can affect patient decision-making about treatment, psychological adaptation to the illness and satisfaction with care. There often are significant gaps in patients' knowledge of their disease and in some cases the purpose of treatment, suggesting that either clear, frank discussions about these important issues have not occurred or that there is significant misunderstanding on the part of the patient or his or her family.

While some forethought and planning may be required, good communication between a physician and a patient with a disease as serious as cancer is worth a little extra effort on both sides.

If you are Newly Diagnosed, here are some Questions to Ask Yourself...and then to Ask Your Doctor.

Many questions will need answers. It is important for you to have honest, open discussions with your cancer care team. They want to answer all of your questions, no matter how trivial you might think they are. No written information can take the place of talking directly with your health care professionals. If you don't understand the answers to your questions, ask them to explain further. Don't let your doctor's attitude or office environment make you feel rushed. Write your questions in advance, with space for you to write notes during your visit with your doctor. Take a tape recorder with you, and turn it on! Most doctors will allow you to tape record their consultations with you. It is in his interest, as well as your own, that you feel that you are fully informed and understand all aspects of your treatment. Prostate cancer is not a disease where it is wise to leave all decision making to your doctor. For instance, consider these questions:

Ask yourself:

1. Is your cancer truly confined to the prostate gland, or has it spread to nearby-or even distant-parts of your body?
2. Is it aggressive or slow-growing?
3. What is your general health status?
4. Are you young enough so that even a slow-growing cancer might someday pose a threat?
5. Are you healthy enough for surgery?
6. Are you willing to risk serious, lifelong side effects to possibly reduce your chances of a cancer death?
7. How important is it for you, in your work or recreation, to maintain bladder or bowel control?
8. How important is it to be able to have erections?
9. Would you find it too worrisome to live with an untreated cancer, too stressful to face frequent monitoring?

Ask your Doctor

1. What is the likelihood that the cancer has spread beyond my prostate? If so, is it still curable?
2. What additional tests do you recommend, and why?
3. What is the clinical stage and grade of my cancer? What do those mean in my case?
4. What is my prognosis?
5. Is recurrence likely?
6. Do I need additional tests to look for lymph node involvement or metastases?
7. What is my expected survival rate based on clinical stage, grade, and various treatment options?
8. Would I have the same survival rate if I chose no treatment and went on with my life?
9. Do you recommend attending support groups, and why?
10. Where do you suggest I get a second opinion on my pathology report and on my treatment recommendations?
11. What other doctors should I talk with? A medical oncologist/cancer specialist, a surgeon, a radiation oncologist?
12. How much experience does the doctor have? How many times a year does he perform this procedure? If a surgeon, is she/he familiar with nervesparing techniques?
13. Do you recommend a radical prostatectomy or radiation? Why or why not?
14. If you recommend radical prostatectomy, will it be nerve sparing? Will it be robotic or laparoscopic? What are the differences in the surgical procedures? What are the differences in outcomes?
15. What do you mean by long term and short term?
16. How long would I live if I did no treatment?
17. How many of the procedures that you're recommending have you done during the last three years?
18. What other treatment(s) might be appropriate for me? Why?
19. Please explain IMRT, Brachytherapy, Hormone deprivation therapy, alternative treatments.
20. Among those treatments, what are the risks or side effects that I should expect?
21. What are the chances that I will have problems with incontinence or impotence?
22. What are the chances that I will have other urinary or rectal problems?
23. What are the chances of recurrence of my cancer with the treatment programs we have discussed?
24. Should I follow a special diet? Should I exercise differently than I already do?
25. What might have caused my diagnosis of prostate cancer?

In addition to these sample questions, be sure to write down some of your own. For instance, you might want to ask about recovery time so that you can plan your work schedule. If you're younger, you may want to discuss your plans for children if there is a possibility you could become impotent or sterile. You also may want to ask about third opinions with a medical oncologist or about clinical trials.

Complementary and Alternative Medicine for Prostate Cancer

According to the National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine, approximately four out of every ten adults have enrolled in some form of complementary or alternative therapy for the treatment of an illness or a disease. Of that percentage, a growing number are seeking alternative forms of treatment for critical conditions, such as prostate cancer. For the most part, complementary and alternative medicine for the treatment of prostate cancer is used as a secondary approach to care though some opt to forgo conventional treatment in lieu of prostate cancer alternative medicine, like naturopathy or a prostate cancer diet. Leading healthcare authorities classify complementary and alternative cancer therapies in one of five categories:

- . Mind/Body alternative treatments for cancer
- . Body-based manipulations
- . Biological prostate cancer alternative medicine
- . Energy-based prostate cancer alternative treatments
- . Whole medical systems

Therapy of the Mind & Body for the Treatment of Prostate Cancer

Prostate cancer patients undergoing conventional treatment often experience high levels of emotional and physical stress which in turn, increases breathing, tenses muscles, and raises heart rate. The long-term effects of stress can be damaging to an individual's overall health. In addition to the emotional effects of stress, many physical maladies are attributed to prolonged periods of this state of being, including fatigue, pain, headaches, and a weakened immune system. What's more, chemotherapy, radiation, and other prostate cancer treatments, like prostatectomy surgery, leave in its wake a slew of unpleasant side effects that further tax the body during this difficult time. Mind/body complementary and alternative prostate cancer medicine seeks to relieve the stresses and side effects of cancer and treatment by deploying psychological and spiritual therapies. Through the use of meditation, hypnosis, or imagery, patients quiet the mind and divert energy and thoughts from the negative to the positive to promote healing and overall physical health. As described by the National Cancer Institute, examples of alternative mind/body prostate cancer treatments include:

Biofeedback: Monitoring and conveying a patient's heart rate, body temperature, and other biological fac-

tors to understand and alter body functions that are typically automated in nature.

Creative Outlets: The exploration of creative activities, such as music and art, to lift mood and raise self esteem.

Hypnotherapy: Focusing one's thoughts on a particular goal or aim, such as healing and the reduction of pain or stress.

Tips From A Survivor of Prostate Cancer

- Prostate cancer is very treatable.
- It is not a death sentence.
- It's normal to be scared and angry and it is okay to grieve but don't lose focus.
- Expect to be depressed for awhile, but never give up.
- Don't rush into anything; get a second or third opinion before you decide on treatment.
- Don't be afraid to ask for help.
- Join a local support group.
- It's your life. Take control of your situation.
- See a board certified urologist, oncologist and/or radiologist.
- Keep learning every day; frequently there is new information.
- Never be afraid to ask questions.
- The only dumb question is the question that isn't asked.
- Share your experience and feelings with family and friends. Don't be afraid to ask them for support.
- Research your diagnosis.
- Research available treatments and therapies.
- Open yourself to new perspective on life.
- Be specific. Write your questions down and bring them with you when you have your appointment with your doctor.
- Write the answers down on paper or bring a tape recorder.
- Include your partner or a friend when visiting your doctor. They may hear something that you don't hear during your appointment.
- Prostate cancer is a family disease — don't shut your family out, especially your partner.
- Don't hesitate to enlist your loved ones for support.
- Join a national prostate cancer organization.
- Become an advocate for your personal health.