

PROSTATE CANCER RISK

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There are definite risk factors for prostate cancer. They include age, race and family history. After the age of 50 a man's risk of prostate cancer begins to rise rapidly with each passing decade. Men over the age of 65 account for more than 80% of prostate cancer cases. In addition, African American men are twice as likely as white American men to be diagnosed with prostate cancer. Prostate cancer in black men also tends to develop earlier.

It appears that approximately 10% of prostate cancers are inherited. Men whose fathers or brothers have prostate cancer run twice the risk of developing the disease. In addition, in families in which breast cancer is common among women, men may also have an above average risk for prostate cancer.

Suspected risks for development of prostate cancer include high fat diet. Research suggests that particularly the fat in red meat boosts the risk of prostate cancer. A substance found in tomatoes called lycopene has been shown to protect against prostate cancer. In addition, preliminary research suggests that Vitamin E and the mineral selenium may reduce prostate cancer risk. Diets rich in soy products have been linked to decreased risk of prostate cancer. Finally, regular physical activity may reduce the risk of prostate cancer.

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