

Learn more about the most commonly diagnosed cancer in men

Treatment can affect us adversely too

The general mental and physical health of men who have been diagnosed with early stage prostate cancer is often affected far more by the type of treatment they receive than it is by the cancer itself. Some of these treatments have effects which can be long-term, such as loss in sexual, urinary or bowel function.

With this in mind, we actively encourage men recently diagnosed with prostate cancer to discuss the implications of their course of treatment with their doctors.

The CALT study

We have had some preliminary results back from our Complementary and Alternative Lifestyle Therapy Study (CALT) in which we asked men who were diagnosed with prostate cancer approximately ten years ago about their use of alternative therapies in addition to their conventional medical treatments.

We enquired about a range of therapies that may or may not help deal with prostate cancer (irrespective of whether we think they work), in order to find out who is most likely to use a particular alternative treatment. So far we have found that:

- 25% of men diagnosed with prostate cancer were currently using at least one CALT for their prostate cancer;
- 16% were using dietary supplements, self help therapies or other than standard medical treatments;
- 16% were using lifestyle therapies such as diet or exercise, and
- 42% were taking a dietary supplement for other health conditions or their

general health or well-being.

Supplements included vitamins, minerals, fish oils, probiotics, botanicals and mixtures of vitamins and minerals. These results are indicative of what we found is happening among men with recently diagnosed prostate cancer. We don't endorse them but merely report their use. Some therapies may have

beneficial or no effects and others may have harmful effects.

Link between prostate cancer and sun exposure

We know that being in the sun too

long can be bad for our skin but our researchers have now discovered it can be detrimental to our overall health.

Scientists from Cancer Council NSW have recently reported a link between prolonged sun exposure in early adult years and the risk of developing prostate cancer. Though exposure to the sun is needed to maintain optimal levels of vitamin D, we do not need more than incidental exposure to achieve this.

Improving care and outcomes

A project to improve the care and outcomes for men with locally advanced prostate cancer has received a grant from the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) and the Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia (PCFA). This has enabled researchers at Cancer Council NSW, the Sax Institute and the University of Sydney, in collaboration with clinicians in NSW Health and the PCFA, to build on previous work developing national evidence-based guidelines for the treatment of locally advanced and

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Prevent non-melanoma skin cancer

Vitamin B3 taken as a pill or rubbed on the skin prevents non-melanoma skin cancer.



For enquiries about this newsletter or Join a Research Study, please email joinastudy@nswcc.org.au or call the Join a Research Study number on 02-9334 1398

metastatic prostate cancer. Its aim is to increase adherence to one of the treatment recommendations.

Cancer Council research projects

CLEAR Study:

Help us find the answer to what really causes cancer Is it Lifestyle? Culture? Genes?

After a successful review to ensure we are continuing to meet our ethical standards, the CLEAR study is once again recruiting people with cancer and, where possible, their partners to take part in a ground-breaking research project.

Revised study materials have been printed in preparation for a major recruitment drive in early 2012. Some recruitment channels for CLEAR have been on hold since May 2011, so unfortunately we have fallen behind our targets.

We are collecting lifestyle and genetic information for the study from at least 10,000 participants, including people recently diagnosed with cancer, and, where applicable, their partners. This is our goal, and your input is crucial!

Physical activity, alcohol consumption, smoking, migration, ethnicity, reproductive history, occupation, screening behaviours and



certain dietary patterns are the key elements for evaluation. Participants are requested to contribute a blood sample. Combined with the information gained from the questionnaire, the CLEAR study can test current and future gene-environment interactions which may lead to developing cancer.

Once we have 10,000 questionnaires completed we aim to investigate many different types of cancer, in order to

provide a better understanding of the causes of cancer in NSW and how these differ in separate cultural groups. By participating, your valuable contribution becomes part of an important reference group, a chance to build a better, healthier future for everyone. We all want a better world; this is your chance to make a difference.

You, or someone you know, can take action by participating in a research project on the lifestyle and genetic factors that influence cancer in the NSW community. By helping us now you can help us defeat cancer in the future. One person at a time.

Please visit www.clearstudy.org.au or call the CLEAR Study Hotline on 1800 500 894. You can help if you or your partner have been diagnosed with cancer for the first time in the past 18 months, live in NSW and are aged 18 or over. Take the survey, make a difference.

Cancer Council NSW researchers have found a low-cost and effective way to prevent non-melanoma skin cancer

Nominated for a 2011 Australian Museum Eureka Prize, the work of Professor Diona Damian has the potential to simply yet dramatically affect skin cancer prevention and treatment.

In Australia, more than 60% of us develop skin cancer, with 2% of NSW's population developing a basal cell carcinoma (BCC) or squamous cell carcinoma (SCC) each year.

Exposure to ultraviolet (UV) radiation is the major cause of skin cancer: 90% of non-melanoma skin cancer and at least 65% of melanoma are due to UV exposure. UV radiation causes skin

cancer in two ways — it causes skin cells to mutate, but also suppresses the immune system that would normally fix these mutations. Sunscreens reduce this effect, but do not provide complete protection.

This research has found that Vitamin B3 (nicotinamide), either taken as a pill or rubbed on the skin, reduces this suppression of the immune system and prevents skin cancer. Recently, they have found that rubbing vitamin B3 into the skin actively helps the healing of premalignant skin lesions in elderly individuals. The research could have a

profound impact.

Treatment of non-melanoma skin cancer in Australia currently costs upwards of \$300 million per year. If Vitamin B3 reduces skin cancer by 50% or more, as the researchers anticipate, this could mean health care savings of \$15 million annually.



Helping to reduce the impact of cancer on Aboriginal people

Aboriginal people with cancer are more likely to die or to have worse outcomes than non-Aboriginal people.

The Patterns of Cancer Care for Aboriginal People in NSW project (APOCC) aims to reduce the impact of cancer on them by investigating what affects the diagnosis and treatment of cancer for Aboriginal people, and how their care can be improved.

Two areas of focus for the research team are whether Aboriginal people are being diagnosed with cancer at later stages than non-Aboriginal people, and how the care Aboriginal people currently receive compares to the care received by non-Aboriginal people.

The Pathways to Diagnosis phase of the project began in 2011, and it will allow the research team to describe in



“This means ensuring no group of cancer sufferers is ignored”

detail the clinical pathways that lead to a cancer diagnosis for Aboriginal people.

Recruitment for the study will continue throughout 2012.

The final and perhaps most significant phase of the project will be communicating the results from the APOCC project. The results will go to people working in Aboriginal and mainstream health, as well as to other researchers who may be able to replicate this study in their state or territory. It will also go to policy makers in the hope of improving the management and outcomes for Aboriginal people with cancer.

“The APOCC project is a key component in Cancer Council NSW’s strategy of ensuring no group is left out when it comes to our mission to defeat cancer”, according to lead researcher, Professor Dianne O’Connell.

Is personalised medicine the future of cancer treatment?

A new way of looking at cancer has the potential to improve treatment

Personalised medicine begins with a simple observation: people are different. We have different heights, weights, genders, backgrounds, and lifestyles. So it should be no surprise that we respond differently to medicines — what will cure one person could make another person worse.

On top of this, there is hidden complexity in many of the diseases that we treat, especially cancer. For example, we think of breast cancer as a single disease, whereas there are actually many different types. Almost every cancer has similar subtypes. These are often indistinguishable even under a microscope but need to be treated individually.



This is where personalised medicine comes in. Personalised medicine uses recently developed technologies to look at the genetic code of tumours. This allows the clinicians to say with

certainty what subtype of cancer it is, and create treatments specially designed to fight that particular subtype. This technique has been used to create targeted treatments for HER2-positive breast cancer, an aggressive form of cancer that doesn’t respond well to conventional treatment.

Cancer Council NSW recently hosted a national meeting on personalised medicine, bringing together scientists, industry, and government to forge ahead in this exciting field. We have funded over \$9 million in personalised medicine research over the last five years, and intend to support this budding field for many years to come.

Cancer Council research projects

Join a research study. Please?

Since 2009, the 'Join a Research Study' project has been successfully recruiting people from NSW who are interested in participating in research studies conducted by Cancer Council NSW or connected with cancer. These studies may be questionnaire based surveys, focus groups, interviews and other types of research. 2011 was its most successful year to date with a total of 631 participants registered to assist in research. This brings the total number of participants to just over 1,100.

These participants have been involved in studies including the CLEAR Study and the ENRICH Study. The CLEAR Study which recruits people diagnosed with cancer in the last 18 months and, where possible, their partners, is aiming to provide the most comprehensive information to date on the lifestyle and genetic factors that influence cancer in the NSW community.



Participants complete a 30 minute survey and are asked to provide a blood sample (optional). 312 'Join a Research Study' participants have joined the CLEAR Study so far.

Over 300 'Join a Research Study' participants have been invited into the ENRICH Study. This is an exciting program that aims to improve lifestyle risk behaviours by providing education and skills in a series of motivational health coaching sessions to support life-long behaviour changes. Participant involvement varies within this study from face to face group sessions, undertaking

physical activity and completing questionnaires.

Focus groups were also conducted with the assistance of people from the 'Join a Research Study' database. Focus groups help new studies gather opinions and suggestions about whether a questionnaire is clear and the terms used are easy to understand before it is widely

distributed. An example of focus group research was held in December 2011 for a new study called the LADY Study. The survey is aiming to investigate women's use of hormone and other therapies for easing menopausal symptoms.

You can help Cancer Council by making yourself available for research. In doing so, you are greatly assisting us in our research to reduce the burden of cancer. To register your interest please complete the online questionnaire at www.cancercouncil.com.au/joinastudy or ring the hotline on 02-9334 1398.

Cancer Council conducts research studies with people from NSW. These studies may be questionnaire based surveys, focus groups and interviews or other types of research. (Study participants will not necessarily be cancer patients)

Register your interest to be included on our Study Mailing List. Your story or the story of someone you know will help us find the answers.

- Yes, please include me on the study mailing list (if yes, we will write to ask you some additional questions relating to your health to allow us to match you to research studies that suit you)
- Tick this box if you have been diagnosed with cancer in the past 18 months (you may be eligible for the CLEAR Study and we will send you information)
- I know someone with cancer who might like to be in the CLEAR Study. Please send me a brochure.

At Cancer Council we recognise the importance of your privacy and the safeguarding of your personal information. If you have concerns about the privacy of the information, you may provide it securely on-line at cancercouncil.com.au/joinastudy. Please be assured that in collecting this information it will be used for research purposes only, and will be handled in accordance with our Privacy Management Plan (www.cancercouncil.com.au) which addresses our compliance with all legislative requirements.

You can also register at
cancercouncil.com.au/joinastudy

Title

First Name

Last Name

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Place the completed information in an envelope addressed to: **Join A Research Study**
Reply Paid 79819
Potts Point
NSW 1335

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