

# THE BATTLE AGAINST PROSTATE CANCER

New drug therapies and treatments promise to help patients beat the odds.

**W**ashington, D.C. has been the site of many summits, but this month's gathering of leading prostate cancer researchers and advocates from around the globe will be more important than ever to the 2.5 million American men now suffering from the disease, and the millions who will get it down the road. "One out of every six American men will be diagnosed with prostate cancer in their lifetime," says Jonathan Simon, president and CEO of the California-based Prostate Cancer Foundation.

The foundation estimates that more than 218,000 new cases will be diagnosed this year and more than 32,000 deaths will be reported, up from 192,000 and 27,000 in 2009. These increases, the first in years, are attributed in part to the aging of baby-boomers and the deteriorating dietary and exercise habits of the American population. But there's good news, too: "Early detection and treatment result in a five-year survival rate of more than 98%," says Simon.

There also have been several major advances in the lab, including such recently FDA-approved agents as Dendreon's Provenge immunotherapy and Sanofi-Aventis's chemotherapeutic agent, Jevtana, which extends longevity for advanced-stage prostate cancer patients. "I'm excited about the new products that have been approved or are in the development stage," says Dr. Judd W. Moul, chief of urologic



The silent killer: One in six American men will be diagnosed with prostate cancer. Early detection of the disease is key for survival.

surgery at Duke University Medical Center and head of its Prostate Center. "We're proud to be part of the clinical trials involved in the development of some of those agents and therapies."

Looking further ahead, researchers are making important genetic discoveries, identifying the different types of prostate cancer, and calculating their varying degrees of virulence and ability to spread. The hope is that those advances will improve physicians' ability to determine which prostate cancers are slow-growing and which require aggressive, immediate treatment.

One ongoing question involves the prostate-specific antigen (PSA) test. Some say it leads to overdiagnosis, unneeded biopsies, and overtreatment. Duke, which continues to monitor the

field, recommends that men get a baseline PSA test at age 40, then work with their physician to determine individual risk and screening frequency. That's also the recommendation of both the National Comprehensive Cancer Network and the American Urological Association, and it fits with results of a recently reported Swedish study that found that PSA screening of men between the ages of 50 and 65 cut the death rate by nearly half.

The Prostate Center at Duke uses its extensive database to track more than 14,000 patients who were treated or evaluated there. It follows their medical progress as well as their quality of life, and it has already developed significant data on the role obesity plays in PSA levels and the effects of statin drugs on prostate cancers. Dr. Lionel L. Bañez, an assistant professor of urology who heads the program, says planned areas of new study include the effect of hormone therapy on PSA levels and the impact of race and ethnicity on post-surgical outcomes.

The Duke center has also developed two new interactive risk calculators, designed to help patients better understand their disease, evaluate the risk of recurrence, and decide on treatment and recovery options. One is for men who have already undergone prostate surgery, the other for those newly diagnosed. Says Dr. Moul: "We want our patients to be equal partners in their care, and to make them an informed part of the decision-making process." ●



## In Our Approach

Many doctors, many options, one focus: you

The Duke Prostate Center is dedicated to providing excellent care to men with prostate cancer and to discovering newer and better methods for cancer detection, treatment, and prevention.

We offer:

- The full range of treatment options from surgery to radiation therapy, chemotherapy, and beyond
- Surgical procedures, including the “gold standard” nerve-sparing prostatectomy as well as minimally invasive robotic prostatectomy
- Multidisciplinary genitourinary screening clinics that allow for multiple opinions from leading specialists
- Access to clinical trials and novel therapies developed through cutting-edge research

**U.S. News & World Report** ranks Duke University Medical Center #7 in the nation for urology.

