

# Prostate Examiner Winter Newsletter

Visit us at [www.prostatecancersupporttbay.org](http://www.prostatecancersupporttbay.org)



Prostate  
Cancer  
Support  
Thunder bay

## **Looking for Support**

### **Local men available to talk to you**

**Gary Allen 621-0552**

**Grant Arnold 933-4214 or  
519-584-5125**

**Marc Breton 628-9944  
(en francais)**

**Rick Eade 683-6573**

**Bill Everitt 767-5768**

**David Everitt 628-5287**

**Marcel Girouard 705-362-8154  
(en francais)**

**Bill Horde 767-1490**

**Ed Long 628-6915**

**Milton Marion 475-0760**

**Dez Stolz 577-9515**

### **Women available to talk to you**

**Beth Long 629-4774**

**Carmen Marion 475-0760**

**Lise Pollard 623-3102(en français)**

## **Northwestern Ontario Region**

### **Atikokan**

**Dave Anderson 807-597-1213 ext 23**

**Larry Brown 807-598-1746**

**Ron Speck 807-597-2219**

### **Dryden**

**Horst Lang 808-223-5516**

### **Fort Francis**

**need a contact**

### **Hearst**

**Marcel Girouard 705-362-8154**

**(en français)**

### **Kenora**

**need a contact**

### **Terrace Bay/ Schriber**

**Mike Regis 807 285 9696**



Merry Christmas and Happy New Year  
May you be blessed with good health and  
happiness in the coming year

Email us at

[info@prostatecancersupporttbay.org](mailto:info@prostatecancersupporttbay.org)

## What Every Guy Needs to Know About Prostate Cancer

Starting with what a diagnosis *actually* means.

**BY GRAHAM ISADOR** (zero cancer.org)

Prostate cancer is the second most common cancer among men in America, with about one in eight men diagnosed during their lifetime. It usually occurs in men 65 and older. Generally, doctors suggest that patients begin screenings in their mid-fifties. But if you're predisposed to the illness—prostate cancer is more likely for Black men and anyone with a family history of the disease— then you should talk to a medical professional about potentially being screened earlier.

According to Dr. Mark Pomerantz, a medical oncologist with Lank Center for Genitourinary Oncology at Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, many people are hesitant to get screened because of the assumption that it entails a digital rectal examination. (Digital as in a finger, not a computer.) While checking your prostate *that* way can be helpful, it hasn't been the primary method doctors use since the mid-nineties. Your doctor is likely to start with a **PSA** (prostate-specific antigen) blood test. Additional screening will be necessary if your levels are high.

Screening is important because many people diagnosed with prostate cancer show no symptoms. Common symptoms including changes in urination, difficulty with erections, and bone aches can also happen to men as they age for reasons that have nothing to do with cancer. By getting screened specifically, you're putting yourself in the best position to catch things early.

A cancer diagnosis can feel understandably devastating. There is a lot of fear associated with the news and a lot of questions about what comes next. But the silver lining to a positive prostate cancer diagnosis is that after you know something is wrong, you can start figuring out what to do about it.

### How serious is a prostate cancer diagnosis?

While prostate cancer is the second leading cause of cancer-related death among men in the U.S. after lung cancer, the five-year survival rate for people with prostate cancer is 98%. The ten-year survival rate remains exceedingly high when the disease is managed carefully and, when appropriate, aggressively.

In other words, while no type of cancer diagnosis is good news, prostate cancer isn't normally fatal. After recovery men will have to continue with regular checkups and testing. Some may need continual hormone therapies. There is a wide spectrum of prostate cancers. Some exist in patients but move so slowly they will never cause problems within their lifetime. Others can spread very quickly. Once a prostate cancer is discovered your doctor will be able to give the appropriate treatment.

### What type of treatment will you need?

The type of treatment you'll need depends on the aggressiveness and progression of the cancer. Generally, prostate cancer is handled with surgery, radiation, or some combination of the two. If surgery is required, Dr. Pomerantz notes that patients can expect an overnight stay in the hospital with a four to six-week recovery. During that stage, you'll be able to perform most day-to-day activities, but heavy lifting and vigorous physical exertion should be avoided.

Radiation treatment for the prostate usually is given for four to eight weeks, Monday through Friday. The radiation is often accompanied by hormonal therapies that can last up to two years, which has proved synergistic with the treatment. Afterward, patients should expect a more-or-less full physical recovery with the exception of potential side effects.

## What are the side effects of prostate cancer after recovery?

Surgery for prostate cancer happens in a very busy neighbourhood of the body. There are nerves that run along the prostate which are responsible for sexual function and continence. If the nerves are damaged, it is possible that men will have issues with erectile dysfunction or controlling their bladder. While surgery for prostate cancer is fairly straightforward, leaving the nerves intact afterward is difficult. Your urologist will talk with you about how possible it is to avoid any damage.

Afterward, there are medications that can help you deal with ED or incontinence if they become an issue. If medications aren't working, there are implantable devices that can help, though hopefully those things won't be necessary.

## How likely is remission?

From Dr. Pomerantz's perspective, the expectation is that when you're diagnosed with prostate cancer is that you will be cured. As previously mentioned the survival rate for men is very high. Unfortunately, rates of remission—and also fatality rates—begin to cause trouble when cancer has spread to other parts of the body. You should chat with your doctor about your specific situation: a lot can be determined about long-term outcomes just by looking at that initial biopsy.

## Are there any preventative measures I should be taking?

There aren't many preventative measures you can take to stop prostate cancer from happening. That said, PSA screenings and paying attention to changes in urination (trouble urinating, frequent urination, red in your urine) will help catch things before they progress. Being aware of screenings helps you actively combat the disease at the onset. The diagnosis of prostate cancer seems scary at initial glance, but as far as cancer is concerned it's a best-case scenario in a bad situation. Staying vigilant will help you get the best results possible.

### Memberships

Time to purchase your 2023 PCS membership.

Still only \$12.00 to be a member.

Can be purchased at the monthly general meeting or  
send an E Transfer to Prostate Cancer Support using

[info@prostatecancersupporttbay.org](mailto:info@prostatecancersupporttbay.org)

(no password required)

### **IN PERSON MONTHLY MEETINGS AT 55 PLUS**

The multi purpose room has been booked for the **third Thursday of every month from 7 PM till 9 PM**

Seating will be appropriate for safe distancing and masks are welcome.

The meeting will also be available on Zoom for those who are not comfortable with in person yet.

#### **schedule of speakers**

**Jan. 19 2023-** Dr Hagerty on the status of Brachytherapy at the Regional Hospital

**Feb. 16 2023-** Dr Vahid Mermoush on research study on prostate cancer and indigenous people

**Mar. 16 2023-** Peer to peer meeting with talk and discussion

## **Could More Testosterone Be The Hidden Key to Fighting Prostate Cancer?**

Reseachers Drive Prostate Cancer “BATty”- Part One: The concept of BAT

January 24 2022/By Janet Farrar Worthington (vitaljake.com)

Androgen deprivation therapy (ADT) has been the bedrock of treatment for advanced prostate cancer for more than half a century. But investigators at Johns Hopkins are rethinking it – in a way that sounds counterintuitive – and driving new approaches to tackle treatment resistance. They’re discovering that shaking up prostate cancer with high-dose testosterone makes it more vulnerable to other treatments.

ADT slows prostate cancer’s progress by shutting off testosterone. Eventually, however, cancer adapts to this new environment and PSA levels start to rise; this stage is called castrate-resistant prostate cancer (CRPC). ADT is not a curative treatment, and long-term ADT causes significant side effects, including fatigue, hot flashes, weight gain, and loss of sexual function.

Several years ago, medical oncologist Samuel Denmeade, M.D., Co-Director of the Johns Hopkins Prostate Cancer Program, and colleagues came up with a remarkable concept for attacking prostate cancer: alternating ADT with high-dose testosterone. “It had been known for a long time that something weird happened when you gave testosterone to prostate cancer cells,” says Denmeade. “Yes, with low doses you could get the cancer cells to grow – but plenty of reports said that paradoxically, at high doses the cancer cells don’t grow as well, or they die. Even Charles Huggins, who won the Nobel Prize for discovering hormonal therapy, said in his Nobel acceptance speech that another way to kill cancer would be to give too much hormone. I was always interested in that idea.”

About 10 years ago, Denmeade conducted a small study to test the concept of using testosterone against prostate cancer. “At the time, it seemed like all the data and literature suggested that the dose was really important; it had to be a high dose.” The hypothesis: Prostate cancer cells adjust to a very low-testosterone environment (created by ADT) by making very high levels of the androgen receptor (AR). And here, as he says, “too much of a bad thing can be a good thing.” These high levels of the AR now make cancer vulnerable to very high levels of testosterone. Cancer cells that survive this respond to high-dose testosterone by turning the AR back down – and making the cancer once again susceptible to very low testosterone.

“The idea is to screw up the cancer cell’s ability to adapt.” Denmeade and colleagues coined the term, Bipolar Androgen Therapy (BAT), “to capture these polar extremes of very high and very low. Not just making the testosterone high, but cycling between high and low.” It’s this cycling that seems to be the key to keeping the cancer off-balance, slowing its ability to flourish. In BAT, men experience high testosterone levels that decrease over a 28-day period, then bounce back up with the next testosterone injection.

In that early study, of just a handful of patients, “we were very cautious, because we didn’t want to make the disease worse. We built in all these safety parameters. But we were surprised: it didn’t seem we made anybody worse. It seemed very safe. The patients did very well, and some of them stayed on the testosterone for a year or more. Most of them felt really good. A number of them did not want to come off of it when it seemed they were progressing: they were just so happy to have more energy, and some of them could have sex again.”

Armed with this initial clinical data to show that BAT was safe and to show some response, Denmeade received funding for additional proof-of-concept studies from PCF, among other sources. Larger studies at Johns Hopkins have followed, including RESTORE, TRANSFORMER, and COMBAT. Other trials testing this concept have been completed or are under way at the University of Washington, University of Colorado, and in Australia, Brazil, and the Netherlands.

To follow in next newsletter: How BAT works

### DONATIONS

Prostate Cancer Support Thunder Bay is a charitable organization that relies entirely on donations to remain in operation.

donations can be e-transferred to [info@prostatecancersupporttbay.org](mailto:info@prostatecancersupporttbay.org)



## PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

Dear members and friends of Prostate Cancer Support Thunder Bay

Summer is gone and now we are bracing ourselves for the snow. Hopefully it will be less than last year.

We had a busy year. We were on zoom doing our monthly meetings as well as coffee meetings twice a month. We kept in touch with prostate cancer support Canada and had our walk and run at Boulevard Lake to raise public awareness. In September, we raised our flag over the city for prostate cancer month and the city lit their fountain in blue for the occasion. We are still offering to pay for men's P S A for 2022 and will probably extend to 2023.

We are happy to finally be back to having our monthly meetings at 55plus.

This year our Christmas get together will be held December 15th. To attend we ask that you have a 2022 or 2023 paid membership, it is still only \$12.00 a year and we use the money for spreading our awareness of this disease. Hope to see you there.

On behalf of the board and myself I would like to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy new year.

Remember there is always someone worse off than we are out there.

Sincerely  
Your President



*Marc Breton*

**CHRISTMAS SOCIAL**

**55 Plus Centre**

**December 15th from 5 PM to 9 PM**

**Food provided by Harbourview catering**

**Must be a paid up member**

## PCS THUNDER BAY

### CONTACT US AT

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THUNDER BAY ONTARIO P7B 4A3

### PHONE:

807 627 0333

### EMAIL

[info@prostatecancersupporttbay.org](mailto:info@prostatecancersupporttbay.org)

### WEB SITE:

[prostatecancersupportbay.org](http://prostatecancersupportbay.org)



*"You're free to go, sir. But, seriously,  
I'd get that prostate looked at."*

### Notice re coffee time

Prostate Cancer Support Thunder Bay  
Coffee Time Meeting on Zoom is on the 2nd  
Thursday of the month at 10:00 AM.  
If you do not receive a reminder and a link by  
the Wednesday before, contact Steve Scalzo  
by email at [sscalzo@shaw.ca](mailto:sscalzo@shaw.ca)

**Prostate Examiner Monthly News**  
Please forward photos or information,  
that benefits communication to  
Prostate Cancer Support Thunder Bay  
members to the attention of Mike  
Aldrich. email: [mralthrich@tbaytel.net](mailto:mralthrich@tbaytel.net)

# **\*\*GET YOUR PSA TESTED\*\***

**Its important**

**We believe in it so strongly that**

**we will reimburse you for your PSA test !!!**

**The PSA test is a key step in early diagnosis of prostate cancer**

**Early Detection Saves Lives  
Get Informed!**

**Talk to your health care professional! Get your blood work done!**

**Send us the receipt**

**Address below or check us out on our website**

**Has been extended to December 31 2023. Available for men in NWO.**

**PCS T Bay Members, please share the above message !**

**Inform your family, relatives, friends and neighbours to request a**

**PSA Test**

**Awareness Support Research**

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