



Prostate Cancer  
Foundation  
of Australia

# SUPPORTER

The newsletter of the  
Prostate Cancer Support and  
Action Groups of South Australia

<http://www.pcagsa.org.au>

**February 2008**

IN a new development to help production of regular newsletters from the many Support Groups throughout South Australia, a new State Newsletter – presented here for the first time, with contributions from all Support Groups – is now going to be printed and distributed monthly, from February to December.

The new Newsletter format will be facilitated by Foster Hill Public Relations, working with freelance journalist David Sly – and contributions from all Support Groups and members are welcomed and will be accommodated; articles of interest, photographs and calendars of coming events, sent by email to [prostate-news@fosterhill.com.au](mailto:prostate-news@fosterhill.com.au)

It's all part of ensuring that Support Group members have access to the best possible information that can help them. We'd appreciate your feedback to ensure that what we have compiled is what you want; suggestions will be addressed for future issues.

## New look for a vital information service

**A message from Andrew Giles, the CEO of the Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia.**

It is with great pleasure that I welcome you to this first issue of our South Australian Newsletter focusing on the work and achievements of Prostate Cancer Support Groups across the State.

According to the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, prostate cancer is the most common cancer diagnosed in Australia (excluding non-melanoma skin cancers). In 2006, an estimated 18,700 new cases of prostate cancer were diagnosed in Australia and tragically more than 2,900 Australian men died from prostate cancer.

The Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia (PCFA), established in 1996, is the peak national body for prostate cancer in Australia. We are dedicated to provide support, information and advocacy to men and their families affected by prostate cancer via:

- A national support group network;
- Prostate cancer information brochures available through GP surgeries, pharmacies and other health professionals;

- A freecall hotline – 1800 22 00 99 – for people seeking information about various aspects of this disease;

- The PCFA's website – [www.prostate.org.au](http://www.prostate.org.au) – offering detailed information regarding many issues related to prostate cancer.

The PCFA also strives to raise awareness about prostate cancer through PCFA Ambassadors (men and women from around the country who speak to community groups and organisations about prostate cancer), Men's Health Information Days organised in capital cities around the country, working with community events such as Movember and Father's Day 5 to promote awareness, and media campaigns aimed at increasing general knowledge about the disease.

The PCFA recently announced its commitment to fund more than \$6 million world-class research in Australia as part of its co-ordinated initiative to cure prostate cancer.

PCFA receives limited funding from government, therefore relies on the

generosity of individuals and the community to achieve its goals. This translates to the tireless work of volunteers to run vital support groups across the country, whose members provide a wonderful resource. Their tireless efforts means that a man diagnosed in Port Pirie or Port Douglas; Mitcham or Melbourne will have access to vital support during their prostate cancer journeys.

We should never forget that the 2900 men who die of prostate cancer each year are not simply statistics; they were our fathers, brothers, uncles and, most importantly, our friends, lost to a disease that if detected early is often treatable and curable.

Of course in the early stages, there are few noticeable symptoms of prostate cancer, which is why men aged 50 and over – or 40, for those with a family cancer history – should not wait for symptoms but instead talk to their GP about prostate cancer.

It's a simple step that could save their life – and we should encourage every man to do it.

**The Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia freecall hotline is 1800 22 00 99**

## Prostate Cancer Action Group

### COMING EVENTS

The first meeting of the Prostate Cancer Action Group for 2008 will be held in the upstairs meeting room at The Cancer Council SA building, 202 Greenhill Road, Eastwood, on Tuesday 12th February 2008.

New members are most welcome. For details and further information, phone group chairman Dean Wall (8390 3030) or Ray Power (8356 9887).

For more information about the Action Group and its activities, visit the South Australian Prostate Cancer Action Group's dedicated website hosted through the community webs homepage at <http://www.communitywebs.org/SAProstateCancer/default.html>

The site has detailed archives of its newsletters, containing many informative articles and published research findings about prostate cancer and its treatment.

# Spreading the word on prostate progress

Trevor Hunt reports on activities undertaken by the Prostate Cancer Action Group since August 2007.

### SAC National Conference & PCFA Men's Health Promotion Forum

The SAC National Conference was held in Adelaide on October 5 at the Stamford Plaza, followed by the PCFA Men's Health Promotion Forum on October 6. SAC members attended the forum, which proved to be very successful with 160 registrations and many favourable comments received. Congratulations to the PCFA, and particularly to Jo Fairbairn and the staff who assisted her.

### PCFA assistance for SA Support Groups

The PCFA has appointed a public relations and marketing firm, Foster Hill, to assist SA Groups. Karyn Foster has been attending various support group meetings to obtain background information for State newsletters which all groups will have the opportunity to make a contribution.

### Cancer Voices SA

Cancer Voices SA, which includes Action Group members Trevor Hunt and Ian Fisk, continues to make good progress and held the Inaugural Cancer Voices SA Consumer Forum on November 13.



Dean Wall

### Awareness Evenings

The Action Group has been involved in three awareness evenings. Two were sponsored by the Freemasons and the other by Prostate SA. All proved to be successful events, with a total attendance of 224 people.

### Future Awareness

An awareness meeting is being planned for the Stirling area during early 2008, with discussion continuing for a mutually convenient date. This meeting is one of a series sponsored by Masonic Lodges in the Adelaide Hills area.

### Speaking engagements

Members from the Action Group have been involved in numerous public speaking engagements – including some Ambassador presentations by Ian Fisk and Dean Wall – which have

featured in some TV and radio coverage. The events included:

- **The Gawler Show**, on September 1 and 2, at which members attended a booth with a display of pamphlets and promoted awareness.
- **Launch of a new Support Group** – McLaren Districts Prostate Cancer Support Group, on September 6.
- **City of Adelaide Concert Band performance** at the Adelaide Town Hall on September 9, with the \$7000 proceeds donated to the PCFA. Group member Dean Wall spoke on behalf of the PCFA.
- **Prostate Cancer National Call-In**, on September 13. 169 calls received. Support Group members attended to distribution of resources.
- **Freemasons Art Exhibition 2007**, on September 14 to 16, and 20 to 23.

### Man Alive!

The Action Group will again present an information stall about prostate cancer at the next Man Alive! event, Semaphore foreshore, on Sunday, March 16. This event has improved each year and draws a large crowd, with entertainment for all ages, and many organisations presenting stalls with an emphasis on men's health.

## Prostate Cancer Support and Awareness: ADELAIDE GROUP

### COMING EVENTS FOR 2008

The Adelaide Group usually meets on the third Monday of each month, in the Park View Room of the Fullarton Park Centre, 411 Fullarton Rd, Fullarton.

#### Monday February 18th

The special guest speaker will be Derrick McManus, who has an inspirational story to tell of the power of human spirit and survival after being shot 14 times.

#### Monday March 19th

Guest speaker will be Ms Judy Brookstrom, Therapist with the Panic Anxiety Disorder Association. She has been conducting anxiety programs and information sessions for many years.

#### Monday April 21st

Guest speaker will be Ms Belle McCaleb, naturopath, nutritionist and herbalist at the Cancer Care Centre Naturopathy Clinic, providing nutritional medicine for prostate cancer support.

#### Monday May 19th

Guest speaker will be Dr Mary Brooksbank, director of the Palliative Care Unit at the Royal Adelaide Hospital.

*For more information, visit the Adelaide Group's dedicated website at [www.psaadelaide.org](http://www.psaadelaide.org)*

# A fresh opportunity for us to be inspired

## A New Year's Greeting from Adelaide Group President, Phil Davis.

It is always refreshing at the beginning of a new year, when people look forward with hope and wonder at what the future holds. Life for some will continue along the same path and for others life will change.

Some people will make alterations to their lifestyle as a matter of choice; for others, change will be thrust upon them as a result of circumstances beyond their control. In this light, we all continue to live with a degree of uncertainty.

For those of us who have been diagnosed with prostate cancer, we perhaps consider our futures with a certain amount of trepidation, especially when our PSA test is due. I guess that

our uncertainty – along with other people diagnosed with a serious illness – is undeniably greater than most people. Still, we have choices; we can choose to be happy and be inspired by life, or choose just to exist.

Real life is about creating a vision for the future. It is important to have ongoing relationships with wives and partners, family, friends and medical professionals. We can reach out to make new friends, enjoy new challenges, to become a volunteer and give back to the community, assist others and, especially for us males, to accept support when needed.

This is especially important for members of Prostate Cancer Support Groups; statistics

show that people who are members of support groups live longer.

I therefore look forward to welcoming all current and new members to our first meeting for the year, on Monday, February 18. Our guest speaker will be Derrick McManus, who has an inspirational story to share of human spirit and survival after being shot 14 times. In my view, people who listen provide support and act to improve the lot of others, create a tiny but crucial ripple of hope.

Wishing you all good health and best wishes for 2008.

Phil Davis  
Phone 82632217  
[Classic100@bigpond.com](mailto:Classic100@bigpond.com)

## Greater assistance for SA groups in 2008

As a result of our continued affiliation with the Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia, all of the affiliated Support and Awareness Groups in South Australia will gain additional benefits to further the cause of support and awareness of prostate cancer sufferers in this State.

The PCFA is a national body that works in partnership with local support groups, without dictating policy of individual groups and respects their au-

tonomy. With this in mind, the PCFA has appointed Foster Hill PR & Marketing, which in turn has engaged journalist David Sly, to ensure newsletters grow and continue to reach the widest number of group members.

More recently, the PCFA has appointed Paul Redman as the Australian Support Group Services Manager. Phil Davis, Vice President of the Association of Prostate Cancer Support and Awareness (SA)

Inc, welcomes Paul to his new role and would be delighted if he could speak at a support group meeting in South Australia during the year, outlining the function of his role. With the help of the organisation's growing professionalism, it can be hoped that a variety of challenges can be met in 2008, hopefully building on our past achievements, enabling wider recognition of the disease and improving the lot of those affected by it.



## City of Onkaparinga Prostate Cancer Support Group

### COMING EVENTS FOR 2008

**INFORMATION DAY AT COLONNADES:** On Friday February 1st a stall will be attended by group members upstairs near Priceline, from 9am to 5pm. If you can spare even half an hour to attend, it will be a help.

**FEBRUARY MEETING:** The Support Group's next meeting is a general discussion/ Round Robin evening in the boardroom at the Noarlunga Community Hospital, Alexander Kelly Drive, Noarlunga Centre from 6.30pm to 9pm on on **Wednesday, February 6.**

**MARCH MEETING:** Pam Lawton from Carers SA will talk about Caring & Carer Support in Noarlunga Community Hospital Boardroom on Wednesday, March 5.

*For more information, visit the City of Onkaparinga Support Group's dedicated website at [www.pesog.org](http://www.pesog.org)*

• Special thanks is extended to the City of Onkaparinga Support Group sponsors: Southern Primary Health Woodcroft, Port Noarlunga-Christies Beach RSL Sub Branch, Thaxted Park Golf Club Inc, The Original Open Market, and to all who provide valuable support to our group.

# Campaigners whose effort makes an impact

**Group President John Shields reflects on 2007 events – and some important people in the southern community who help make such events a great success.**

The City of Onkaparinga Prostate Cancer Support Group ended the year with a barbecue at Willunga, attended by 35 people including Mayor Lorraine Rosenberg, and the newly elected Member for the seat of Kingston, Amanda Rishworth MP.

Our Support Group is an integral part of the local community and conducts two social barbecues each year in an all-weather facility, provided by the Willunga Lions Club.

We find these events are a great way to bring our members together in a relaxed and comfortable setting, together with those who have supported us throughout the year.

Our Patron, Councillor Artie Ferguson, and his wife Juli, are also very much involved in establishing Support Groups for all cancer sufferers in our City, and I have been so impressed with what they have been doing, both in the community, and to help our Support Group, that I felt moved to ask them to tell us a little bit about themselves.

The couple originally formed the Southern Districts Residents Action Group, which fought to have uranium core samples removed from the hill

above Christie Downs. Later, the issue of ensuring clean water for the southern region was a battle fought from their lounge room – action which made the State Government address the filtration of the Happy Valley and Myponga Reservoirs. It was a groundbreaking campaign, embracing important water issues long before it became a popular cause.

Artie was elected to Council in 1983 and the man dubbed “The Mouth of the South” is currently working to establish the Witton Bluff Walkway Development, and the Port Noarlunga RSL Car park & Memorial Gardens.

Artie builds bridges between local people and the decision makers at all levels, and works with all people – no matter what their political persuasion.

Artie is very proud to help the Onkaparinga Prostate Support Group and as Patron has been able to assist in new doors being opened for promotion and fundraising, while also giving the group advice.

Artie was diagnosed with prostate cancer and is currently on hormone treatment. He always says that there are other people worse off than himself, and he always keeps a positive attitude.

His passion is the Carlton Footy Club followed closely by his “shags” lifesavers group (a tattoo on his arm proves that!), his Scooter and lawn bowls, while Juli enjoys gardening, cooking and being with her children.

They both enjoy live theatre & music, appreciate the great outdoors and long walks on the beach.

For the full story on Artie's achievements and work in the region, please check the City of Onkaparinga Support Group's dedicated website [www.pcsog.org](http://www.pcsog.org)

Now that Artie and Juli's story has been told, perhaps you would like a story about your Prostate Cancer journey included in a future newsletter.

I believe that telling a personal story can be a great benefit to others – not only to those who attend the Support Group meetings, but because the newsletter reaches out to the wider community.

Telling more such inspirational stories may encourage others who have thus chosen to go it alone through their prostate cancer journey, to attend our meetings and find that they are definitely not alone, and that they too have a valuable story to share.

## Mitcham Prostate Cancer Support Group

# Strong attendances for dedicated local group

The Mitcham Support Group, formed in May 2005, meets at the Colonel Light Gardens RSL Club, 4 Prince George Parade, Colonel Light Gardens, on the fourth Thursday of each month from February to November. Attendances at the meetings, which run from 7pm to 8.45pm, has been strong, with as many as 45 participants through 2007.

Most meetings feature guest speakers addressing prostate cancer and various other health issues, with general discussion among the group members often supplemented by screening DVDs on topical prostate cancer and health issues. It's an important part

of support group activities that members and partners be given time to discuss their own health issues, and this is encouraged at every meeting. For the final meeting in 2007, an early Christmas dinner was held at the Colonel Light Gardens RSL Club, with 19 support group members and their partners attending. This is the second year that this type of social function has been staged, and its success has given us encouragement to combine with another support group for an even larger, relaxing and enjoyable social evening. The first Mitcham Support Group meeting for 2008 will be held on Thursday, February

28. This event will include the Annual General Meeting and an update of stories and activities from our members over the Christmas/New Year break. If time permits, a DVD will be shown, probably a segment from the PCFA Men's Health Promotion Forum held in Adelaide on October 6, 2007. Members are welcome to bring partners and friends to this and all our meetings throughout 2008.

**For further information, phone Mitcham group chair Terry Harbour on 8271 0513, Jeff Roberts on 8277 3424 or visit our website [www.psamitcham.org](http://www.psamitcham.org)**

### COMING EVENTS FOR 2008

The Mitcham Group usually meets on the fourth Thursday of each month, in the Colonel Light Gardens RSL Clubrooms, at 4 Prince George Parade, Colonel Light Gardens.

**Thursday February 28** will be the Mitcham Group's first meeting for 2008, serving as a combined annual general meeting, and members' discussion forum, with the screening of health information DVDs.

*For more information, visit the Mitcham Group's dedicated website at [www.psamitcham.org](http://www.psamitcham.org)*

## Barossa & Gawler Prostate Cancer Support Group

# Search continues for new officers to lead group

The Barossa & Gawler Group members continue to prove they are a social lot – even while the group's quest for new committee members continues.

Following the success of a luncheon gathering to conclude the 2007 meeting programme, 2008 will begin with another meeting built around a social format. This time it will be a dinner meeting in the home of outgoing chairman Tony Woolley and his wife, retiring secretary Jill, at 4 Armstrong Avenue, Nuriootpa, from 7pm on Tuesday, February 26.

A charge of \$10 per person will contribute to the cost of food; please bring your own drinks. All members, prospective members and their families are welcome.

As yet, the group has not filled the vacant positions of chairman and secretary, though the group will be kept afloat by a leadership team comprising treasurer/librarian Robert Reimann, former chairman Alan Hall and Dr Stewart Martin. Negotiations are continuing for the group to have some

involvement with Barossa & Area Community Health Services.

Preliminary planning meetings by the leadership team have suggested some changes to group activities, including the introduction of daytime meetings and using different venues. It has also been suggested that some meetings be used for special interest discussion groups.

These proposals and a preliminary draft of the 2008 events programme will be presented to members at the Social Meeting on February 26.

### COMING EVENT

**Tuesday February 26** Dinner meeting from 7pm at the home of Tony and Jill Woolley, 4 Armstrong Avenue, Nuriootpa.

• *For more information about the Barossa & Gawler Group – and the vacant positions on its committee – please contact Alan Hall at [jalful2@bigpond.com](mailto:jalful2@bigpond.com)*

## Wild mushroom on the menu of new cures

ISRAELI scientists claim that a wild mushroom, used in traditional Chinese medicine for more than 100 years, could treat prostate cancer.

Researchers at the University of Haifa in northern Israel announced on December 14 they had found molecules in the *Ganoderma lucidum* mushroom, commonly known as the reishi, which help suppress some mechanisms involved in the progression of prostate cancer.

"We already knew the mushroom could impede the development of cancer by affecting the immune system. The in-vitro trials we have done show that it attacks the cancer cells directly," said researcher Ben Zion Zaidman.

"These results give rise to hope about developing medication to treat prostate cancer," he said of research presently carried out only in Petri dishes. The research still has to be tested on animals.

The reishi is found only in remote, wild areas, preferring a habitat of rotting plum or oak tree trunks in heavily forested mountain areas.

The Chinese have tried to grow reishi mushrooms for centuries, but it was only in the early 1970s that Japanese experts could cultivate them.

Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert announced in October that he is suffering from prostate cancer and is expected to undergo surgery early this year.

*Article by Belinda Goldsmith & Eric Beech, Reuters: posted on [www.fightprostatecancer.org](http://www.fightprostatecancer.org)*

# Walking can prevent bone loss caused by prostate treatments

**Exercise may reduce and even reverse bone loss caused by hormone and radiation therapies used in the treatment of localised prostate cancer, according to a new US report.**

THE BENEFITS of simple exercise, such as walking, can help remedy bone loss through prostate cancer treatments, decreasing potential risks of bone fractures and improving the quality of life for these men, according to a study presented in October 2007, at the American Society for Therapeutic Radiology and Oncology's 49th Annual Meeting in Los Angeles.

Paula Chiplis, PhD., RN, the lead author of the study and a clinical instructor and senior research assistant at Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore explained that the study's findings flew in the face of accepted practice.

"Prostate cancer patients are not routinely advised to exercise. Walking is one tool that prostate cancer patients can use to improve their health and minimize the side effects of cancer and cancer treatments," says Chiplis.

"Walking has no harmful side effects, if done moderately, but it can dramatically improve life for men suffering from side effects from some prostate cancer treatments."

Men with localised prostate



cancer frequently receive radiation therapy followed by months of hormone therapy to treat their cancer. Radiation is used to kill the cancer cells, while hormone therapy decreases testosterone and oestrogen that feed the cancer cells, thereby preventing the tumour from growing.

Men undergoing hormone therapy lose between 4 to 13 per cent of their bone density on an annual basis, compared to healthy men who lose between .5 to 1 per cent a year, beginning in middle age.

Men are typically not thought to be at risk for osteoporosis and bone fractures; however, their rate of bone loss is greater than that of post-menopausal women.

The study shows that prostate cancer patients undergoing hormone therapy that walked about five times

a week for 30 minutes at a moderate pace maintained or gained bone density, while those who didn't exercise lost more than two per cent of their bone density in eight to nine weeks.

The study involved 70 sedentary men with Stage I-III prostate cancer, who were randomly assigned to either participate in the exercise plan or usual care (not exercise) during radiation treatment, with more than half also receiving hormone therapy. Researchers wanted to determine the effects of a nurse-directed, home-based walking program in maintaining physical function and managing cancer and treatment-related symptoms during radiation and hormone treatment for prostate cancer patients.

## Reg Mayes update

Jan 15 2008. Reg Mayes is back in Repat hospital, as he has been much of the time since before Xmas. He has not given up but is still fighting."

Research confirms that Prostate Cancer looms as the most threatening disease for Australian men

# Measuring the cost of an escalating danger

PROSTATE CANCER is set to become the most threatening disease for Australian men.

Currently it is the most common cancer found in Australian men and the second most common cause of cancer deaths in Australian males. Only lung cancer causes more male cancer deaths.

Breast cancer remains the most common cause of female cancer deaths, although in 2006 the number of women who died from breast cancer was less than the number of men who died from prostate cancer.

Alarmingly, while the incidence of prostate cancer has increased, the expected number of men with prostate cancer in the future is also escalating. The incidence of

prostate cancer is expected to increase by 43 per cent to 15,202 new cases of prostate cancer by 2011.

The Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia (PCFA) has identified key research areas needed to fight the growth in prostate cancer.

Thanks to a partnership with BHP Billiton, the PCFA, via its national audit, has identified world class researchers in Australia who can lead this work.

The challenge now is to raise funds to bring the research together in a united collaborative way, and to lobby governments for greater support.

To assist with its lobbying task, the PCFA has undertaken detailed analysis of the

## The economic burden of prostate cancer in Australia during 2006:

- **Medical costs**  
**\$267,900,000**
- **Loss of productivity and welfare costs**  
**\$1,135,100,000**
- **Cost of informal care**  
**\$18,600,000**
- **Total cost burden**  
**\$1,421,600,000**

economic burden of prostate cancer. While many costs associated with prostate cancer are intangible — it is not possible to replace a loving father who has died from the disease, or to quantify the costs of living in poor health and battling the myriad

side effects of treatments — monetary expenditure can be measured to estimate the economic burden of prostate cancer on Australia.

The total economic burden of prostate cancer, including medical costs, loss of productivity and wellbeing and the cost of informal care, is estimated to be \$1.4 billion. The total cost of prostate cancer is estimated to be \$7.6 billion in real terms between 2006 and 2011.

The PCFA's Collaborative Research Initiative has already started to receive significant support from corporate Australia in an effort to provide some real answers to the growing problem of prostate cancer.

## Local research finds new marker for aggressive cancers

RESEARCH funded by the Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia has identified a new marker for aggressive prostate cancers.

Of the 12,000 men who will be diagnosed with prostate cancer this year, 20 per cent will develop life threatening, metastatic prostate cancer within 10 years of surgery — an incidence when the cancer spreads to other parts of the body, such as the bones.

The current way to monitor whether a man's cancer may metastasise is through regular testing via the

prostatespecificantigen (PSA) blood test, to see the rate of increase.

The PCFA believes that new markers are needed urgently to identify which men are at the highest risk of metastatic disease at the time of their initial surgery, and has supported research in this area to find a solution where more tailored treatment can be designed for individual prostate cancer sufferers — something that is not currently possible.

A recent discovery by Associate Professor Susan

Henshall, the inaugural Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia Fellowship recipient, looks hopeful in advancing this issue.

Dr Henshall reports: "We have discovered recently that men who have low levels of a marker called AZGP1 in the prostate at the time of surgery have a greatly increased risk of developing metastatic cancer.

"This means that these men could benefit from more aggressive treatment, such as radiotherapy or chemotherapy, around the time of surgery, when they still have potentially

curable cancer, and gives patients with a low risk of developing metastatic disease the option of deferring treatments that have a negative impact on quality of life."

This exciting development is currently being validated in other cohorts of prostate cancer patients.

It is hoped a prospective trial of this marker will begin in NSW early this year.

Dr Henshall is confident the research will ultimately allow doctors and patients to make better informed decisions about treatment options.



## Surgery offers best survival rates for prostate cancer sufferers

**Anthony J. Brown MD reported through Reuters Health that the type of therapy may have little impact on 5-year survival rates from prostate cancer but at 10 years, survival difference emerges.**

NEW research shows that removal of the prostate gland, a surgical procedure also known as "prostatectomy," offers longer survival rates than radiation therapy, careful monitoring, or hormone therapy for men with "localized" prostate cancer, a common form of the disease in which the cancer has not yet spread to other organs. "We observed that

prostatectomy was associated with the best long term prognosis -- in particular, for younger patients and patients with (aggressive) tumors," senior author Dr Christine Bouchardy, from Geneva University, Switzerland, told Reuters Health.

"We are not very surprised that prostatectomy offers the best chance of cure at long term, but we should wait for results from (clinical) trials to confirm this."

The study, reported in the Archives of Internal Medicine, involved 844 men with localized prostate cancer, including 158 who underwent prostatectomy, 205 had radiation therapy, 378 had careful monitoring

and treatment if needed, 72 received hormone therapy, and 31 had other types of therapy.

In general, the type of therapy had little impact on the 5-year survival rate from prostate cancer. The exception was treatment with hormone therapy alone, which resulted in a worse 5-year survival than the other therapies.

At 10 years, however, the survival differences emerged between the groups. Patients treated with radiation therapy or followed with careful monitoring had prostate cancer-related survival rates of 75 and 72 per cent, respectively, whereas for those treated with surgery

it was 83 per cent. Further analysis showed that the inferior survival seen with radiation therapy and close monitoring was largely confined to patients younger than 70 years or those with aggressive cancers. "According to this study, surgery appears to offer prostate cancer patients the best survival chances at long term," Bouchardy said. "Given the lack of consensus on the best treatment for patients and the important therapeutic disparities in routine health care practice, results of this study can help patients and practitioners in their decision making."

*Source: Archives of Internal Medicine, October 8, 2007.*

## Blueberries pack killer punch

**ABC-Radio reporter Jennifer Mace discovered an innovative cordial tested at Sydney University with great powers.**

A cocktail of antioxidants and blueberry juice have shown to be effective in the fight against prostate cancer.

Scientists at the University of Sydney have found that tumours in mice were reduced by 25 per cent after the mice were fed an antioxidant drink called Blueberry Punch.

Nicola Fox, a dietician with the company that has developed the drink made with blueberries, tarragon, turmeric, raspberry, citrus peel and olive leaf extract, focused on using all the foods that are high in antioxidants and high in anti-inflammatories.

NICOLA FOX: Initial trials at Sydney University were in-vitro (in petrie dish) and it was shown that the product was killing prostate cancer, breast cancer, stomach cancer, colon cancer and so then it proceeded to in-vivo trials, in rats that had really aggressive tumours in their prostate. They were given Blueberry Punch and over 10 days the rats had a reduction in their tumour size of 30 per cent which is really significant in scientific terms.

JENNIFER MACEY: Do you know what ingredient is causing this?

NF: The trick is that it is not

one particular ingredient. It is the ingredients in combination that they have a synergistic effect. If you have the ingredients separately, it wouldn't have the same effect that it does when you put those ingredients together.

JM: What is it about the antioxidants that fight cancer?

NF: On different levels, the cancers start off as an inflammatory process and if you can stop that inflammation process, you stop the cancer from growing. There are also other proteins involved. For example, if you can inhibit a protein called cyclin D1, you

can reduce the size of the cancer.

JM: Was that you were specifically looking to do?

NF: Yes – and it needed to be quick because a lot of these cancers are really fast growing aggressive cancers and the product needs to work fast.

JM: Why a drink?

NF: There are many medical treatments out there but unfortunately with drugs and pharmacological treatments, there are side effects and there are potential adverse reactions, whereas with food, you minimise that. There aren't any side effects to taking this drink, no negative, terrible adverse reactions that you could get with drugs.