



# KELOWNA PROSTATE CANCER SUPPORT & AWARENESS GROUP

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Our regular Prostate Cancer Support & Awareness Group meeting was held on January 11th. I mentioned a couple of items that I had recently obtained off the Internet, including that a team of researchers in Sweden have discovered that an artificial intelligence platform is capable of accurately diagnosing prostate cancer in tissue samples, offering the potential to speed up diagnostics and reduce the costs for healthcare services.

The findings were published in *The Lancet Oncology* in December and suggests that AI systems can be trained to detect and grade cancer in prostate needle biopsy samples with an accuracy rate equal to that of international pathology experts.

The researchers collected over 5,759 biopsy samples from 1243 patients and the AI program outperformed 10 of 15 pathologist observers. The automated deep-learning system achieved a performance similar to pathologists for Gleason grading and could potentially contribute to prostate cancer diagnosis. The system could also potentially assist pathologists by providing second opinions on grading group.

I also mentioned that one of our fellows had recently been diagnosed with bladder cancer - this was 11 years after receiving Low Dose Rate Brachytherapy. He had to undergo an operation that took about 3 1/2 hours called a Radical Cystectomy - which includes the removal of the bladder, prostate gland, seminal vesicles and some lymph nodes.

I invited any of those in attendance who would like to come up and talk about their own diagnosis and treatment - It was interesting to hear the fellows talk about the different types of treatments and the stories of their journeys. Including those who have been treated but the cancer has returned and are now on anti-hormone therapy and are doing well.

Another bit of information was that the American Cancer Society recently stated that Prostate Cancer Deaths are expected to hit the highest numbers in two decades. And the estimated number of new cases will be much higher this year than last year.

## Prostate Cancer: Investigating the Impact of Diet -

The following is an excerpt of an article by *Tim Newman in Medical News Today* - Oct. 2019

A recent review searches for links between dietary choices and prostate cancer. The authors conclude that there may be an association between plant-based diets and a decreased risk of prostate cancer, as well as a link between dairy intake and increased risk.

As with other types of cancer, scientists are still uncovering the full range of risk factors for prostate cancer.

Some scientists have turned to nutrition, but - for various reasons - measuring the effect of the diet on disease is notoriously difficult. As it fluctuates wildly from day to day, month to month, and year to year.

Also, certain dietary habits tend to tie in with lifestyle factors that influence health. For these reasons and many more, studies investigating the links between prostate cancer and diet have produced conflicting results.

Recently, researchers from Mayo Clinic in Rochester, MN, carried out an extensive literature review in an effort to cut through the noise. They published their findings in the *Journal of the American Osteopathic Association*.

According to the authors of the latest study, there is some circumstantial evidence that diet might influence prostate cancer risk.

They note that Western countries have much higher levels of prostate cancer than Asian countries, where people consume much lower levels of dairy.

Also, they explain that "decreasing mortality rates in the U.S. for several common cancers, including [prostate cancer], coincides with decreased meat and dairy intake and increased plant-based food consumption."

Of course, these correlations do not prove that dietary choices can influence prostate cancer risk. As the authors explain, the decrease in the mortality rates of cancer might be at least partially, thanks to improved cancer screening and treatment. However, they believe that these correlations merit further scrutiny.

To investigate, they carried out a review of relevant studies that researchers published between 2006 and 2017. In all, they examined 47 studies, which included more than 1 million participants.

**Most studies showed that plant-based foods are associated with either decreased or unchanged risk of [prostate cancer], whereas animal-based foods, particularly dairy products, are associated with either increased or unchanged risk of [prostate cancer].**

The authors found neither an increase nor a decrease in prostate cancer risk in studies that assessed red meat, white meat, processed meat, or fish intake.

In short, even with access to an impressive quantity of data,

uncovering solid links between diet and cancer is still challenging.

With that said, the authors believe that the potential increase in risk relating to dairy is worth investigating.

*"Our review highlighted a cause for concern with high consumption of dairy products. The findings also support a growing body of evidence on the potential benefits of plant-based diets." - Lead Author Dr. John Shin*

Another issue that haunts most observational nutrition studies is dietary recall. When participants have to report what they have consumed in the past days, weeks, or months, they are likely to make errors or, perhaps, even misreport them.

Similarly, prostate cancer does not occur until later in life, which brings further confusion. It is unclear whether an individual's current diet influences prostate cancer risk as much as their diet 10, 20 or 30 years earlier.

**Overall, the authors conclude that "despite the [...] discordant conclusions found in the literature, our review shows that, in general, plant based foods may be associated with a decreased risk of [prostate cancer], whereas dairy products may be associated with an increased risk of [prostate cancer]."**

If nothing else, this review demonstrates the substantial difficulties of studying the effects of the diet on health. In their paper, the authors explain that one of the "biggest obstacles in the field of

dietary research is the lack of standardized methods of capturing and reporting diet and lifestyle data."

Without standardization, it is difficult to compare the results of one study with those of another, as well as replicate the findings.

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## WITT'S WIT (ON THE LIGHTER SIDE) -

### Exercise for People Over 60

Begin by standing on a comfortable surface, where you have plenty of room at each side. With a 5-lb. potato sack in each hand, extend your arms straight out from your sides and hold them there as long as you can. Try to reach a full minute, and then relax. Each day you'll find that you can hold this position just a bit longer. After a couple of weeks, move up to 10-lb potato bags. Then try 50-lb potato bag and eventually you can lift a 100-lb-potato bag in each hand and hold your arms straight out for more than a full minute. (I'm at this level). After you feel confident at that level, put a potato in each bag.

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**Note:** next month we are planning on having a Nurse Specialist out to speak to us on Incontinence. She is the Nurse Continence Advisor with Interior Health and a Clinical Instructor at UBC Dept. of Medicine.

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## Men Over 40 With BRCA2 Mutations Must Get Prostate Cancer Screening -

The following was obtained from several sources including Victoria Foster a contributor to *Healthcare*

**R**esearchers from the U.K. and the U.S. have called for immediate action to recommend screening for prostate cancer in men with BRCA2 mutations over the age of 40 after presenting the results of a new study in early November 2019 at the *National Cancer Research Institute* annual meeting in Glasgow.

BRCA mutations are most commonly known to greatly increase the risk of breast and ovarian cancer in women with the disease, but also increase the risk of several types of cancer in men, including breast and prostate.

The new research looked at almost 3,000 men aged 40-69, with just over half carrying inherited mutations in either BRCA1 or BRCA2 and the others healthy controls. The men were screened with a common test for prostate cancer called the PSA (prostate-specific antigen) test.

This new research found that PSA tests were more likely to pick out more serious forms of prostate cancer in men who carry the BRCA1 gene fault than non-carriers - suggesting these men could benefit from regular PSA testing.

Men were offered a yearly PSA test and depending on the result, they were offered either a biopsy to confirm their disease and treated if needed or asked to come back the following year.

The Kelowna Prostate Cancer Support & Awareness group does not recommend treatment modalities or physicians: However, all information is fully shared and is confidential. The information contained in this newsletter is not intended to replace the services of your health professionals regarding matters of your personal health.

*The Kelowna Prostate Cancer Support & Awareness Group would like to thank Janssen - and TerSera for their support and their educational grants towards our newsletters and our support group.*



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## UP COMING MEETING DATES FOR 2019 -

**March 14**

### **Meeting Location:**

Our meetings take place in the Harvest Room at the Trinity Baptist Church located at the corner of Springfield Rd. and Spall Rd. enter through the South Entrance off the main parking lot and follow the signs upstairs to the Harvest Room. The meeting begins at 9:00 A.M. Doors open at 8:30 A.M. There is elevator access if needed

**NOTE:** Many of our past newsletters are available for viewing and printing through our website. - [www.kelownaprostate.com](http://www.kelownaprostate.com) -

*A big Thank You to Doris at Affordable Web Design for all her work on our website.*

