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KELOWNA PROSTATE CANCER SUPPORT & AWARENESS GROUP

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We had an excellent speaker at our Kelowna Prostate Cancer Support Group Meeting in April. Dr. Mathew Ho, one of our Kelowna Urologists was out to speak about our new Da Vinci Xi Robot.

Dr. Ho mentioned that he was the first surgeon to use our new robot. Our Da Vinci Xi Robot arrived in October, and the first surgical procedure was a robotic assisted prostatectomy performed in early November. He mentioned that the Robot is much more precise than open surgery because instead of looking into a 'big dark box' you are looking at an enlarged view of the area you want to treat. With the use of the robot there is also much less blood loss, and the surgeon has better access for sparing the nerves that provide erectile function. The recovery following robotic surgery is also much better.

Since the first robotic assisted prostatectomy in November Dr. Ho has preformed more that 20 robotic assisted prostatectomies.

If you wish to have your contact information removed from this contact list please let me know and I will remover you information.

Prostate Cancer Recurrence

The following is a brief excerpt of information obtained from the Mayo Clinic Nov. 22, 2025

Overview -

Prostate recurrence is when prostate cancer comes back after treatment. It can happen when if some cancer cells hide in the body and start growing again.

Prostate cancer recurrence most often happens in the first five years after treatment. But it can happen at any time. It can occur after any type of treatment, including surgery, external beam radiation therapy, brachytherapy and hormone therapy. For every 10 people treated for early-stage prostate cancer, studies show that 3-5 have a prostate cancer recurrence.

The first sign of a prostate cancer recurrence typically is rising levels of prostate-specific antigen (PSA) in the blood. Sometimes PSA rises, but the cancer doesn't show up on imaging tests. Healthcare professionals call this a biochemical recurrence.

Many treatments exist for prostate cancer recurrence. When the cancer comes back in the prostate area, treatments may offer the chance for a cure. When prostate cancer spreads to other parts of the body, treatments may help control the growth of the cancer and extend your life.

Symptoms –

Prostate cancer recurrence often doesn't cause symptoms when found early. If the cancer comes back, its usually detected on a blood test. A prostate-specific antigen (PSA) test might find the cancer before it causes symptoms or before it can be found with imaging tests.

Symptoms of prostate cancer recurrence can happen if the cancer grows without being detected. In time the cancer can cause:

- Accidental leaking of urine.
- Back pain.
- Blood in the urine.
- Bone pain.
- Extreme tiredness.
- Weakness in arm and legs.
- Weight loss without trying.

When to see a doctor –

Make an appointment with your doctor or healthcare professional if you have any symptoms that worry you. If you have regular checkups with the healthcare team (Urologist or Radiation Oncologist) that treated your prostate cancer, tell the team about your symptoms.

Causes –

Prostate cancer recurrence can happen if one or more cancer cells remain in the body after treatment. Sometimes this is caused by cancer cells that break away from the original growth in the prostate before treatment. The cancer cells can hide for many years before they start to grow.

Risk Factors –

Factors that increase the risk of prostate cancer recurrence include:

- **Higher cancer stage.** The cancer's stage tells the healthcare team about the extent of the cancer. Having a higher stage when first diagnosed with prostate cancer increases the risk of recurrence.

- **Higher Gleason score.** A Gleason score is a number that tells the healthcare team how different the cancer cells look from healthy prostate calls. It helps the team understand if the cancer is likely to grow slow or fast. Having, a high Gleason score before treatment increases the risk of prostate cancer recurrence.

- **Higher PSA level.** People with prostate cancer often have elevated levels of prostate-specific antigen (PSA) in their blood. Having a high level of PSA

when first diagnosed increases the risk of prostate cancer recurrence.

- **High-risk DNA changes in the cancer cells.** Prostate cancer happens when healthy cells develop changes in their DNA. Certain changes may make the cancer more aggressive or more likely to resist treatment.

Prevention –

There's no sure way to prevent prostate cancer recurrence. Some studies show that healthy lifestyle choices are linked to a lower risk of recurrence. You may try these approaches if you're concerned about prostate cancer recurrence. They also can help reduce the risk of other conditions, such as heart disease, which is common in people with prostate cancer.

Editor's Note:

I recommend that once someone has been diagnosed and treated for prostate cancer, they never, ever stop having regular PSA tests. I don't care how long it has been since you have been treated for prostate cancer. I have seen it come back five years following treatment and even in my personal case 29 years post treatment. Did these people know they had recurrence NO it was just because of the rise in the PSA. When doctors are watching the increase of the PSA, they often look at the doubling time of the PSA.

Witt's Wit (On the Lighter Side)

I'm not a bad golfer.
I'm just an expert at
Finding the parts of the
course the architect
didn't want anyone to see

Scientists make Surprising Discovery when Examining prostate Cancer Tumors

The following information was obtained from several Internet sources.

A recent study by the American Society of Clinical Oncology revealed that scientists found small fragments of plastic in the tumors of most prostate cancer patients, according to a new study from NYU Langone Health in the U.S.

Microplastics were found in nine out ten patients and in those cases, the cancerous tissue has twice as much plastic as healthy prostate tissue samples.

The researchers analyzed tissue samples from 10 patients with prostate cancer who underwent surgery to remove the entire organ. Using visuals of both benign samples and tumor samples, as well as using specialized equipment, the scientists identified plastic particles in 90% of the tumor samples.

The study found that the cancerous tissue contained on average more than double the amount of plastic as the healthy tissue samples. This equates to about 40 micrograms of plastic per gram of tissue compared to 16 micrograms.

Researchers avoided contaminating the samples with other plastics by substituting standard tools with those made from aluminum, cotton and other non-plastic material.

The scientists say this is the first direct evidence linking microplastics to prostate cancer.

"By uncovering yet another potential health concern posed by plastic, our findings highlight the need for stricter regulatory measures to limit the public's exposure to these substances, which are everywhere in the environment," said senior study author Vittorio Albergamo, assistant professor in the department of pediatrics a NYU Grossman School of Medicine.

The study findings were presented during the *American Society of Clinical Oncology's Genitourinary Cancers Symposium* in San Francisco on Feb. 26, 2026.

The scientists hedged their findings and acknowledged limitations. For example, plastic tends to accumulate over time. Plastic accumulating could also be caused simply by a longer life and more consumption. Tumors rely on blood supplies and plastic tends to travel via the blood. These tumors also have a tissue structure that allows for more bioaccumulation than other tissues.

Dr. Albergamo cautioned that they still need a larger sample to work with, and that they aren't sure that plastic is causing the cancer, but they remain concerned about the potential link.

Scientists generally acknowledge most humans have microplastics in their bodies and begin accumulating them shortly after birth (these plastic particles are even found in breast milk). The study of microplastics picked up steam in the 2010s, after scientists detected microplastics in drinking water, air and household dust, and seafood.

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 educational grants that go towards our newsletters and our support group.

UP COMING MEETING DATES FOR - 2025 – 2026

June 13 – Fall 2026 meetings yet to be determined

Meeting Location:

Our meetings take place in the Harvest Room at Trinity Church located at the corner of Springfield Road and Spall Road. Please enter through the South Entrance off the main parking lot and follow the signs upstairs to the Harvest Room. Our meetings begin at 9:00 A.M. and the 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

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