

The Team Approach To Treating Prostate Cancer

(NAPSA)—When it comes to prostate cancer, two or three heads may be better than one.

For optimal care, men with prostate cancer often need the expertise of several types of doctors and other health professionals. Called a multidisciplinary team approach, or MDA, this type of approach has been shown to be beneficial in breast cancer. Working with a multidisciplinary team knowledgeable about the latest advances in prostate cancer treatment can help optimize the treatment plan.

Approximately 240,000 American men are expected to be diagnosed with prostate cancer in 2013, and are likely to encounter a range of treatments involving multiple specialists along their journey. Through an MDA, all specialists are working together toward the same goal—the patient's health.

The Prostate Cancer Team

Men typically learn they have prostate cancer from their urologist, who then enlists the support of an MDA as soon as possible. In an MDA, all treatments are discussed and tailored for each patient at every stage of the disease.

The MDA for prostate cancer may involve the following:

- Urologist—a specialist in diseases of the genitourinary tract, including urologic cancers
- Medical oncologist—a specialist who treats all kinds of cancers and understands the different types of medicines used to treat cancer, as well as their side effects
- Radiation oncologist—a specialist in the use of radiation therapy to treat cancer
- Oncology nurse—supports many different aspects of care, including managing side effects.

Other team members may include pathologists, psychologists, diagnostic image specialists, social workers, nutritionists and pain management specialists. Seeing the value of an MDA, many hospitals have established multidisciplinary clinics that offer a “one-stop shop” for prostate cancer care.

Questions to Ask Your Doctor About the MDA

- Do you participate in an MDA to treat prostate cancer?
- What specialists will be included in my team?
- Who is in charge of coordinating my care?



In an MDA, all treatments are tailored for each patient at every stage of the disease.

• What happens if team members disagree about treatment options?

• Can you tell me about the recent advances in the field?

Benefits of MDA for Prostate Cancer

Advances in prostate cancer treatment are helping patients live longer lives and enjoy their daily activities. More new treatments may be available soon, making treatment decisions even more complex.

“Different medical specialties bring unique expertise to the treatment team,” said Neal Shore, M.D., FACS, a urologist in Myrtle Beach, S.C. “With so many types of treatments now available for prostate cancer, coordination among various medical disciplines is vital so that all appropriate options are considered before the disease becomes overwhelming.”

As the treatment landscape continues to evolve and expand, new programs and resources are helping urology practices support the needs of their patients with various stages of prostate cancer. In addition, using the MDA can more quickly identify patients who may benefit from combined treatments such as radiation and hormonal therapy together, or use of chemotherapy. Good communication and ongoing interaction also offer patients an invaluable resource for education, guidance and emotional support.

By working together and ensuring patients understand their options, the MDA can devise treatment plans that are designed to offer the right treatment to the right patient, by the right specialist at the right time.

Patients should speak with their doctor if they have any questions.