A New Test Aids In The Battle Against Prostate Cancer

(NAPSA)—A new type of test for prostate cancer is designed to improve on existing methods, and that's good news for men about to undergo testing—and those who love them.

It is estimated that one in four men with an initial negative prostate biopsy actually have cancer. This is cancer that is hidden from existing forms of testing. This is further complicated by the fact that it can be difficult to identify prostate cancer through PSA testing alone.

The new test, called Confirm-MDx for Prostate Cancer, was created to address this dilemma. The test can help distinguish, at the genetic level, patients who have a true-negative biopsy from those who may have occult, or hidden, cancer.

This can help urologists rule out prostate cancer–free men from undergoing unnecessary repeat biopsies and help them to rule in high-risk patients who may require repeat biopsies and potential treatment. The ConfirmMDx report provides "mapping" of test results to help guide the urologist on a follow-up biopsy.

All of this was welcome news to Brian and Sabrina Wagner. Now in their mid-40s, they were married in 2012 and settled down to life in Ft. Worth, Texas.

Because Mr. Wagner's father had been treated for prostate cancer in his mid-50s, his wife pushed him to get a PSA blood test—even though he was younger than the age at which most experts recommend regular PSA testing.

So it was cause for immediate concern when his first PSA test came back at 8.2, well above the usual result for a man his age. A follow-up test confirmed the result, and that prompted his urologist to recommend a prostate biopsy, in which tissue samples

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are collected from the prostate. The samples are then examined in a pathology lab for signs of cancer.

Despite Mr. Wagner's higher-than-normal PSA count, the biopsy samples showed no signs of cancer. Suspecting that an infection had caused the high PSA, his urologist gave him two cycles of antibiotics. Still, his PSA count rose, and one year later, he had a PCA3 test. This urine test has some utility in helping to detect disease, but it, too, came back negative for cancer.

By the following spring, Mr. Wagner's PSA had more than doubled to above 18. Concerned about that increase, Mrs. Wagner continued to do her research. She discovered information online about ConfirmMDx for Prostate Cancer.

Mr. Wagner's ConfirmMDx test results came back, and unfortunately, they confirmed the Wagners' fears: Mr. Wagner had prostate cancer. But at least now they knew the nature of his condition and what could be done to treat it. The ConfirmMDx test had given them the essential information that all the other, earlier tests had not.

One additional benefit of the ConfirmMDx test is that it provides "mapping" of the methylation hot spots to help guide the urologist on a follow-up biopsy. The test recommended the doctor focus on the top right side of Mr. Wagner's prostate.

Another piece of good fortune came shortly afterward, when a friend recommended a urologist who specializes in robotic, nerve-sparing prostatectomies (removal of the prostate). Mr. Wagner had the procedure in July, and lab tests confirmed there was cancer in about one-third of the gland.

Mr. Wagner reports that he feels as healthy and strong after the surgery as he did beforehand. "I feel fine now," he says, pointing out that he was able to return to work just two weeks after the operation. Shortly after surgery, Mr. Wagner was scheduled for radiation treatment and was considering chemotherapy as a precautionary measure.

In the meantime, the Wagners have high praise for the ConfirmMDx test and their caregivers. They have also become outspoken advocates for having men and their families do the kind of research that helped the Wagners find guidance from the ConfirmMDx test.

For more information about ConfirmMDx, talk to your urologist or visit www.mdxhealth.com.