

MEN'S HEALTH

Professional Golfer Urges Men 50+ To Be Proactive About Prostate Disease *Hale Irwin Launches Campaign To Raise Awareness About Enlarged Prostate*

(NAPSA)—Hale Irwin, 2002 Champions Tour Player of the Year and three-time U.S. Open champion, has a special health message for all men 50+: Be proactive and get an annual prostate exam to help ensure early diagnosis of prostate disease so treatment options can be considered.

“Many men experience urinary problems as they get older and think they’re a natural part of aging that can’t be helped or, even worse, that they’re signs of prostate cancer,” said Irwin. “I’ve joined with A.F.U.D. to tell men 50 and over that these urinary symptoms are often the result of a common disease called BPH, or enlarged prostate. The good news is that there’s something you can do to manage the disease, with help from your doctor.”

Irwin, whose family has a history of prostate disease, has teamed up with the Prostate Health Council of the American Foundation for Urologic Disease (A.F.U.D.) to launch a national public awareness campaign, called Better Prostate Health.

The campaign aims to raise awareness about benign prostatic hyperplasia (BPH), which is also known as enlarged prostate. BPH is a progressive disease that affects millions of American men over age 50. Better Prostate Health is sharing these facts about enlarged prostate:

- More than half of men over 50 have an enlarged prostate;
- By age 80, nearly 80 percent of men will have an enlarged prostate;



Golf great Hale Irwin says men 50+ can protect their health with regular prostate check-ups.

- Without treatment, an enlarged prostate can continue to grow; and
- In some cases, BPH can lead to worsening urinary symptoms and to long-term problems such as the inability to urinate (known as acute urinary retention, or AUR) and the need for BPH-related prostate surgery.

Diagnosing Prostate Disease

The American Urological Association recommends that men get a yearly prostate check-up beginning at age 50 (age 45 for African-American men or men with a family history of prostate disease). Any man who suddenly develops persistent urinary problems should promptly consult with his physician.

The check-up should include a discussion of symptoms, a digital rectal exam and a PSA (prostate-specific antigen) test, a simple blood test that measures the level

of PSA in a man’s blood. While the PSA test is generally used as a screening tool for prostate cancer, noncancerous conditions like BPH and prostatitis can also elevate PSA levels.

The prostate is a small gland that is part of the male reproductive system, located just below the bladder. It wraps around the urethra, the tube that carries urine from the bladder out of the body. Normally the size of a walnut, the prostate can continue to grow as a man ages and cause urinary problems.

Men with BPH may experience the following urinary symptoms:

- A weak urine stream;
- An urgent need to urinate;
- Leaking or dribbling; and
- Frequent urination, especially at night.

Treatment Options

Treatment for enlarged prostate can range from “watchful waiting” to surgery. Additionally, there are medicines such as 5 alpha-reductase inhibitors (5 A-RIs), which shrink the prostate, improve urinary symptoms and reduce the risk of AUR and BPH-related surgery. Alpha-blockers are another option for reducing urinary symptoms. These drugs work by relaxing the smooth muscle of the prostate and bladder neck to improve urine flow and reduce bladder outlet obstruction.

To learn more about an annual examination for enlarged prostate disease and treatment, go online to www.afud.org or call A.F.U.D. at 1-410-468-1800.