

# Prostate

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in 1998 and almost 42,000 will eventually die of the disease. The American Cancer Society estimates that 234 of every 100,000 Black men will get prostate cancer this year which compares with only 135 of every 100,000 White men. Not only is the incidence rate almost twice that of Whites, but Black men are two to three times more likely to die of the disease.

To state it succinctly, the most important risk factor for prostate cancer in the United States is to be a Black male. When one looks at the statistics, an explosive rise in the rate of prostate cancer among Black males started about 1989. Since that time it has more than doubled. So, what accounts for this explosive exponential growth rate?

Well, no one is 100 percent sure. It may be that part of the increase is simply due to the introduction of a simple blood test that accurately detects the presence of prostate cancer. This test is called PSA (prostate specific antigen) and has only come into common use since about 1989. PSA determinations and a digital, rectal examination are quite accurate in identifying the presence of cancer in the prostate.

According to the American Cancer Society, about one out of five American men will develop this disease in his lifetime. The incidence of prostate cancer throughout the world is highest in North America and northwestern Europe. Only rarely will men in Asia, Africa, Central America and South America develop malignant prostatic cancer. This uneven geographical distribution suggests that diet and environment may be playing a role in the development of this disease. It is suspected that factors in the diet and/or the environment that affect the level of the male sex hormone in men are also probably causes.

Black men have a poorer survival rate of

prostate cancer than Whites. This may be because Black males have fewer medical examinations for reasons that are both cultural and economic. Lack of access to medical care also plays a large role. All of these negative factors combine to result in Black males being diagnosed at a later stage of the disease, thus limiting treatment options and lowering the possibility of cure.

The risk of developing cancer of the prostate increases with age. More than 75 percent of all prostate cancers in men in this country are diagnosed after the age of 65. The highest risk factor is being a Black male followed closely by having a close relative — a father or brother — with prostate cancer. These findings suggest that there may be a genetic or racial difference in prostate cancer risks.

Preventative measures are difficult to ascertain since the specific causes of prostate cancer remain unknown. However, it makes good sense to eat a healthy diet consisting of large amounts and varieties of fresh fruits and vegetables and decreased amounts of meats and other foods containing saturated fats. Avoidance of smoking, alcoholic beverages, drugs and exposure to environmental pollutants and infections (largely undetermined) all seem to play a role in a preventive strategy. The above measures will also help to reduce the risk of all other types of cancers as well as heart disease, diabetes, hypertension and stroke.

Since older men are more likely to develop cancer of the prostate than younger men, at what age should a man be tested? Some propose that any African-American man with a positive family history of prostate cancer or with one or more of the risk factors associated with prostate cancer should have a yearly digital exam and PSA determination beginning at age 40. Others disagree, but I recommend yearly check-ups after 40, along with other routine health checks to ensure basic, general good health in all areas.



Gates elked...

Photo special to the Sentinel-Voice

During the Centennial Convention Anniversary of the Improved Benevolent Protective Order of the Elks of the World, Clark County Commission Chairwoman Yvonne Atkinson-Gates, second from the right, was awarded the "Emma V. Kelley Achievement Award." Shown left to right are Honorable Donald P. Wilson, Grand Exalted Ruler, Zenobia J. Poyner, past grand daughter ruler and Honorable Dr. Jean C. W. Smith, Grand Daughter Ruler.

# Training

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establishments then graduate to Strip properties.

Wright said the training will teach employees to be consummate professional. The 46-year-old Las Vegas has held virtually every position in a hotel, including dealer.

He also assisted in opening a hotel school in Singapore and is working with Native Americans on operating their casinos.

Wright said the Mirage Corporation funded the program because Mirage Resorts, Inc. Chairman Steve Wynn wanted his property to reflect the community it serves. He wants to improve upon a work force comprised that is

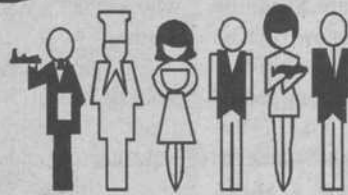
three percent African-American.

Laurie Bingham, the project coordinator for the Mirage Corporation, said the new dealers will have the opportunity to advance.

Artie Nathan, vice president of Human Resources at the Bellagio, said the Mirage Corporation worked with the Ministers Alliance on the program. He couldn't say whether the program would continue.

"There has been a cement ceiling for African-Americans in Las Vegas," Wright said. "I take my hat off to the Mirage Corporation for giving African-Americans an opportunity to break through that cement ceiling."

# ATTENTION



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*Culinary Union, 1630 S. Commerce Street  
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