



spotlight on health

Americans Lack Awareness Of Prostate Condition

(NAPS)—Despite an increasing amount of health information available—through doctors, and on the Internet—many people are still unaware of the facts regarding common prostate health concerns.

For example, a recent survey about prostatitis—a sometimes serious and often painful condition that will affect more than half of the male population at some point in their lives—found that Americans have little knowledge about the disorder.

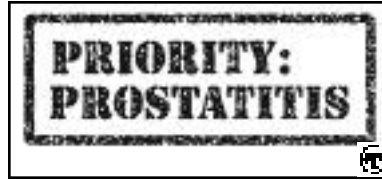
The symptoms of prostatitis include fever, chills, and pain in the lower back and genital area and can become severe. While the incidence increases with age, prostatitis can affect men of any age and accounts for 25 percent of physician visits for genital and urinary complaints among young and middle-aged men.

There are three kinds of prostatitis; acute bacterial, chronic bacterial and nonbacterial. Acute bacterial prostatitis comes on suddenly and can have severe symptoms that may require hospitalization, whereas chronic bacterial prostatitis may have no symptoms other than those of a recurring urinary tract infection. Bacterial prostatitis can be treated with antibiotics.

Although prostatitis and prostate cancer can exist at the same time, prostatitis is non-cancerous and there is no evidence that it leads to cancer. Yet 83 percent of survey respondents who considered themselves “knowledgeable” about prostatitis erroneously believed that prostatitis is an indicator of cancer.

Other survey results include:

- 84 percent of survey respondents had never heard of prostatitis;



- only 17 percent of those with some knowledge of prostatitis know that about 50 percent of men will have prostatitis in their lifetime;

- 16 percent of those with some knowledge of prostatitis believed (incorrectly) that both men and women can develop prostatitis;

- women, by a margin of nearly 20 percent, consider themselves either somewhat or very knowledgeable about this exclusively male disease; and

- while 60 percent of those with knowledge of prostatitis know that antibiotics are used to treat prostatitis, many falsely believe that surgery (58 percent) and chemotherapy (39 percent) are appropriate treatments for the condition.

The survey, conducted by Wirthlin Worldwide, was sponsored by the American Foundation of Urologic Disease (AFUD), Bayer Corporation, and The Men's Health Network.

“Men suffering with prostatitis often don't know what hit them,” said Tom Bruckman, of AFUD. “Our goal is to get men talking about this illness—with their urologists, with their wives, so they can get the best treatment.”

To receive a free brochure about prostatitis, its symptoms, diagnostic tests and available treatments, call the Bayer toll-free line at 1-800-206-6300. Consumers can also obtain information on prostatitis via the Internet at www.afud.org or www.menshealthnetwork.org.