

CPDR Publishes Groundbreaking Study on the Relationship between Obesity and Prostate Cancer

A newly released paper on the relationship between obesity and prostate cancer is gaining attention for the DoD Center for Prostate Disease Research (CPDR) in Rockville, Maryland. The paper by Dr. Christopher Amling, Dr. Robert H. Riffenburgh, Dr. Leon Sun et al., published in the February 2004 issue of the Journal of Clinical Oncology, is entitled "Pathologic Variables and Recurrence Rates as Related to Obesity and Race After Radical Prostatectomy". The paper was even featured in the editorial section of the journal as well as on the front cover of this high impact publication – a mark of distinction for the CPDR group.

Dr. Christopher Amling, assigned to Naval Medical Center, San Diego, and lead author of the study, reports that many news groups including the New York Times and ABC News Radio have interviewed him about the paper and its groundbreaking results. The goal of this study was to explore the impact of obesity, a current epidemic in the American population, and race on the pathologic features and outcome of men undergoing radical prostatectomy. "We evaluated a large population of radical prostatectomy patients from the nine CPDR sites and looked at the relationship between Body Mass Index (BMI) and pathological outcome (grade and stage), and the probability of recurrence of cancer after radical prostatectomy" he commented. Patient data from 1987 to 2002 was used, with patients categorized as obese (BMI > 30 km), overweight (BMI 25 to 30 km) or normal (BMI < 25). Normal and overweight groups were combined and then compared with the obese group.

The intake of dietary fat has been consistently associated with the risk of prostate cancer and red meat has been linked to the development of more aggressive disease. But even though lifetime dietary fat consumption and obesity are clearly linked, the relationship between obesity and the development of more aggressive prostate cancer, particularly in radical prostatectomy patients, is unknown.

Dr. Amling continued "We found that obese men had a more aggressive form of disease, with higher grade cancer and higher recurrence rates after surgery. African-American men, who also had more aggressive tumors and higher recurrence rates, were also more likely to be obese." He concluded that the findings of the CPDR group and those of others suggest that body mass or obesity may have some role in the racial disparity in tumor behavior. Further study is warranted.

For more information on CPDR visit their website at www.cpdr.org.