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Men's Health Network Encouraged by Latest Prostate Cancer Screening Recommendation from the USPSTF

MHN Recommends that Men [Get It Checked](#)

WASHINGTON — Men's Health Network (MHN) is encouraged by the latest recommendations from the U.S. Preventative Services Task Force (USPSTF) that urges men to talk to their healthcare providers about when, or if, they need to be screened for prostate cancer. This recommendation is not yet final and is open for public comment.

The Task Force is a government supported panel composed of national medical experts whose recommendations influence healthcare providers and both public and private insurance coverage decisions. Preventive screenings rated A or B by the Task Force are covered by the Affordable Care Act.

The "C" recommendation means that "The USPSTF recommends selectively offering or providing this service to individual patients based on professional judgment and patient preferences." The group's latest draft recommendation is an improvement over the 2012 decision to recommend against the use of prostate-specific antigen (PSA) testing for the early detection of prostate cancer.

MHN believes that the Task Force's latest findings will encourage more men to talk to their medical providers about prostate cancer screening.

"While we recognize the need for screening is greater in some men than others, we hope the latest recommendation will encourage all men to take a more active role in their health and wellness," said Ana Fadich, Vice President of MHN.

Prostate cancer is the most common cancer in men with more than 161,000 new cases each year and over 26,000 deaths, according to the American Cancer Society. African-American men, men with a family history of the disease, and men exposed to Agent Orange and some other chemicals are at greater risk.

"MHN believes all men should speak to their healthcare provider about a baseline prostate cancer screening at age 40, earlier if they wish, and consult with their health care provider about screenings beyond that age," Fadich said. "We are particularly encouraged by the acknowledgement that 'patient preferences' are critical to important screenings and healthy outcomes."

(more)

"As a society, we have taken prostate cancer too lightly for far too long. As the second leading cancer killer of men, it occupies a niche among diseases that closely parallels breast cancer among women both in terms of incidence and death rates in their respective populations," said Dr. Jean Bonhomme, a physician, board member of MHN, and founder of the National Black Men's Health Network. "Every man should be given the opportunity to consider screening, especially those at higher than average risk owing to race, family history, or other factors."

"The importance of PSA testing is that it's bringing men into contact with the healthcare system," said Dr. Ramon Perez, an urologist and advisor to MHN. "Hispanic men may not have access to adequate healthcare—it is becoming a major problem in treating problems that are an epidemic."

High-risk communities also benefit from increased communication with health providers.

"Community outreach programs serving high-risk populations facilitate communication between community members and healthcare providers," said Darrell Sabbs, legislative affairs and community benefit manager for Phoebe Putney Health System. "In many cases, these groups may not access the healthcare system and have dialogue with their medical professionals about PSA test among other issues."

"Increased communication between men and their medical providers will cause them to be more knowledgeable about their health and make more informed choices," said James Morning, advisor to MHN, Vietnam veteran, and a prostate cancer survivor. "It is important that men, particularly African-American men, get a complete check up, including the PSA. So many men today are being diagnosed with later stage prostate cancer because they were not regularly screened."

MHN's screening recommendations for men and for women can be found at www.GetItChecked.com

About Men's Health Network

[Men's Health Network](http://www.menshealthnetwork.org) (MHN) is an international non-profit organization whose mission is to reach men, boys, and their families where they live, work, play, and pray with health awareness messages and tools, screening programs, educational materials, advocacy opportunities, and patient navigation. Learn more about MHN at www.menshealthnetwork.org and follow them on Twitter @MensHlthNetwork and Facebook at www.facebook.com/menshealthnetwork . For more information on MHN's ongoing Dialogue on Men's Health series, visit www.dialogueonmenshealth.com

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