

CHM

Heartfelt

MAGAZINE



A Christmas miracle

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spread Christmas cheer

December 2024

CHMinistries.org

MEMBER TESTIMONY

A Christmas miracle

With Sonya struggling to breathe and unable to stand, Christmas morning took a sharp and frightening turn for the Lewis-Picon family. Sonya's lungs filled with fluid as her blood oxygen levels plummeted—her body began to shut down.

Placed on a life-support machine as a last chance for her recovery, Sonya's husband, Aaron, placed his hands over her and prayed.

Watch their video to hear Sonya and Aaron tell their miraculous story.



SPIRITUAL HEALTH

Prepare your heart for the holidays with our Advent series!

Enter to win an Advent giveaway this season! Christmas time can be hectic, and it's important to slow down and focus your heart on Jesus amidst the holiday hustle and bustle. That's why we created a resource to help! Download our Advent series for weekly video content, a devotional, and a chance to win a \$200 VISA gift card.

CHM PROGRAMS

Donate to CHM Give and spread Christmas cheer

'Tis the season to put love in action! When you donate to CHM Give, you help a fellow member when they most need it. Important reminder: For charitable giving to be applied to 2024 for tax deductions, it must be received by December 31. So don't delay, give today!



PHYSICAL HEALTH

6 most common cancers for American men

BY MICHAEL D. JACOBSON, D.O., M.P.H, CHM'S MEDICAL DIRECTOR

Cancer afflicts men even more than women, and with higher mortality rates: it's vital to think about common cancers in men, and to know the screening tests for early detection.

Prostate cancer

Other than skin cancers, prostate cancer is the most common cancer among U.S. men. The American Cancer Society estimates that 1 in 8 men are diagnosed with prostate cancer. However, most prostate cancers are treatable because they're discovered early, aren't as aggressive, or both.

Men at greatest risk are those over 50, African American, who have a family history of prostate cancer, and men with high-fat diets rich in red meat and dairy.

Prostate cancer screening is by blood test or rectal exam, sometimes both. Prostate-Specific Antigen (PSA) is a test measuring a prostate-produced protein. Elevated levels may indicate prostate cancer. An elevated PSA generally requires a biopsy. Discuss with a physician the potential benefits and risks before undergoing a PSA screening.

A digital rectal exam is a routine part of adult male physical exams, during which a doctor feels the prostate through the rectum, and often performed along with a PSA test.

Lung Cancer

Lung cancer, the second most common cancer, is the leading cause of cancer-related deaths. Smoking is the primary risk factor. However, nonsmokers can also develop lung cancer through exposure to radon, a naturally occurring radioactive gas that can accumulate in homes, asbestos, diesel exhaust, and certain chemicals, including fine particulate matter in polluted air.

Low-Dose Computed Tomography (LDCT) is recommended for current or former heavy smokers (those who've quit within the past 15 years) aged 50-80. LDCT uses low radiation levels to create detailed lung images, allowing for early detection of tumors.

Colorectal Cancer

Colorectal cancer, including cancers of the colon and rectum, is the third most common cancer. It typically affects men over 50 but can occur at any age. Other risk factors include a family history of colorectal cancer or adenomatous polyps, diets high in red and processed meats, and sedentary lifestyle.



For average-risk men, a colonoscopy every 10 years starting at age 45 enables detection and removal of precancerous polyps. An alternative is Fecal Immunochemical Test (FIT), an annual stool test that detects hidden blood. Flexible sigmoidoscopy is another option; however, since it only examines the lower part of the colon, it's recommended every five years and in combination with FIT. I recommend colonoscopy.

Bladder Cancer

Bladder cancer ranks fourth, with smoking being the most significant risk. The harmful chemicals enter the bloodstream and are filtered by the kidneys, eventually concentrating in the bladder.

Men have an increased risk if they work with certain chemicals, such as those in the rubber, leather, and textile industries. Long-term bladder infections or irritation also increases risk.

Bladder cancer is screened by routine urinalysis, which checks for blood in the urine. Urine cytology further examines urine for cancer cells. Finally, urologists can use cystoscopy to see the bladder wall by inserting a thin tube with a camera through the urethra.

Melanoma (Skin Cancer)

Melanoma is the fifth most common cancer and the deadliest skin cancer. Melanoma can develop from existing moles or appear as new growths on the skin.

Melanoma's primary cause is ultraviolet (UV) radiation from the sun or tanning beds. Those at greater risk are people with fair skin and blue eyes, who have a family history of melanoma, and those with unusual moles or a large number of moles.

Regular self-exams and professional skin exams can help detect melanoma early. Look for new or changing moles, as well as any moles that look different from others (the "ugly duckling" sign). When in doubt, dermatologists use a scope to examine the lesions and, when necessary, biopsy them for microscopic study.

Testicular cancer

This is the most common cancer in **young** men and can be deadly if missed. Young men (between ages of 15 and 35) are strongly encouraged to perform monthly self-examinations—best performed after a warm bath or shower—to detect unusual lumps, swelling, or changes in testes' size or consistency. This is especially important for men with a history of an undescended testicle as an infant.

Inform your physician if anything abnormal is noticed. They'll perform a physical examination. Identified abnormalities can be further explored with imaging studies.

An ultrasound is typically the first imaging test ordered. Blood tests measure tumor marker levels. Blood levels often rise with testicular cancer, making this test valuable in detection and monitoring treatment effectiveness.

Conclusion

Understanding the most common cancers among U.S. men, their risk factors, and the importance of screening is crucial for early detection and improved outcomes. With regular screenings, lifestyle modifications, and staying informed about your health, you can significantly reduce the risk of developing these cancers or catch them in their early stages when treatment is most effective.

Discuss your individual risk factors and screening options with your provider to develop a personalized prevention plan.

References

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(My office requires one week for responses. This service isn't intended for acute problems or to replace the advice of your physician.)



HEALTH
WATCH



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CHM Give is our solution for maintained pre-existing conditions. Through voluntary donations, CHM Give enables members to help fellow brothers and sisters in Christ get the life-changing care they need.



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