



# Health/Education

## Breast cancer hits men, too

CONTRIBUTED STORY  
FOR THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

A patient of Northwest Cancer Specialists, James Lowery turned his tragedy into a bridge of awareness as he had educated and supported others, with male breast cancer. Diagnosed with the disease last year, Lowery helped form a monthly support group called Bridging the Gap: Male Breast Cancer Awareness Group which meets the first Thursday of every month at 7 pm. in the Legacy Good Samaritan Hospital, 1040 NW 22nd Ave., Conference Room D. The first group of its kind in the United States, the support group encourages men to talk about breast cancer and learn the truth about it being a difficult diagnosis. "Because it's uncommon in men, many men will be informed not to worry about a

lump or swelling," said Teresa Lyons, the wife of breast cancer victim Dave Lyons.

According to the American Cancer Society, this year some 1,400 men will be diagnosed with breast cancer and 400 men will die of it. Both Lowery and Dave Lyons noticed lumps in their breasts years before it was diagnosed. And for Lyons part of the struggle was finding a doctor who would take him seriously.

Luckily for Lowery, once he saw a physician, he received a mastectomy within weeks and chemotherapy about a month later from Northwest Cancer Specialists' Dr. Ralph Weinstein. "My father is alive today because of NCS," said Paula Beaulieu, Lowery's daughter who lives in Tigard. Dr. Weinstein who worked with Lowery and his daughter believe some doctors delay the diagnosis of

breast cancer because it is more common among women and not on doctors' minds. "For both patients and doctors, there needs to be more awareness so there can be an early diagnosis," Weinstein said. The support group can help battle the perception that men do not get breast cancer and the stigma behind it.

So far, the cancer support group has about five regular members and several who come and go. Besides sharing concerns and educating new diagnosed victims, the group also sponsors speakers, such as Dr. Weinstein. Lyons and his wife also plan on having barbecues and organizing more events for members. "Our goal also is to get out there and tell men that they are not alone," Teresa said. Northwest Cancer Specialists (NCS) is the largest oncology physician group in the

Pacific Northwest. Northwest Cancer Specialists currently provides medical oncology, gynecological oncology and bone marrow stem cell transplantation in 10 locations throughout Portland and Vancouver. They also provide professional oncology services in The Dalles and in Hood River, Oregon.

NCS physicians are board-certified in internal medicine and specially trained and certified in medical oncology (cancer), gynecological oncology and surgery, and hematology (blood). Northwest Cancer Specialists is affiliated with US Oncology, the nation's largest network of professionals dedicated to oncology.

## Prostate cancer test benefits African-American men

CONTRIBUTED STORY  
FOR THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

The "free" PSA blood test is highly accurate in detecting prostate cancer in African-American men, the group with the highest rate of prostate cancer in the world.

Study results published in the March issue of *Urology* indicate that the FDA-approved blood test works as reliably in African-American men as it does in white men.

The test can be used to help men avoid unnecessary and costly biopsies.

Prostate-specific antigen exists in several forms in the blood. Some forms are bound to protein and others are unbound, or "free."

"It is crucial that we can rely on our most effective screening tools to work equally well on all men regardless of their race," said study co-author Dr. Kevin Slawin, assistant professor of urology at Baylor College of Medicine and director of the Baylor Prostate Center at The Methodist Hospital.

The free PSA test is a follow-up to the PSA test. It helps determine whether slight elevations shown in the PSA test will be of the most benefit to

those at high risk for prostate cancer, Slawin said.

"We don't know for sure why African-Americans have a higher rate of cancer or why they tend to have less favorable outcomes," he said. "However, early detection is currently our best weapon in the fight against prostate cancer."

Researchers say African-American men tend to develop prostate cancer at a younger age.

When the cancer is diagnosed, it is often more advanced and more aggressive.

The free PSA test is used as a follow-

up test for men who have a moderately elevated level of PSA. Of this group of men, whites have a 25 percent risk of having prostate cancer, while the risk in African-American men is from 30 percent to 50 percent. Before the free PSA test on a multi-center study, the largest to compare free PSA test results between the two races. It was conducted in seven major U.S. medical facilities, using the Hybritech free PSA assay manufactured by Beckman Coulter, Inc.

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- Culture & entertainment**
- ★ Lillian Pitt's Shared Spirits sculpture, masks, prints
- ★ No! Kidding! Choir (11 am)
- ★ Polish Dance Troupe (1 pm)
- ★ Stage II/Teen Artists (2 pm)
- ★ ATZINNEGAYALLI (3 pm)

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