

Prostate Cancer

Active Surveillance

What is it? Is it right for me?

- Approximately 80% of men diagnosed with Prostate Cancer have a very low risk disease and may never need treatment.
- Every prostate cancer treatment is likely to have side effects which may include urinary incontinence and erectile dysfunction (E.D.).
- Active Surveillance is a method to carefully monitor your progress and avoid unnecessary treatment.
- Active Surveillance is a viable option for men with low Gleason and PSA scores.
- Active Surveillance doesn't entail any procedures that will result in sexual dysfunction or urinary incontinence.
- If your prostate cancer is considered low risk you can be a candidate.
- If after talking with your doctor you determine that active surveillance may be right for you, a specific plan of action will be developed.
- It will include regular check-ups and follow-up PSAs at regular intervals and perhaps an annual biopsy.
- These protocols can differ somewhat depending on your physician and cancer center and will evolve as new information and studies provide more evidence.
- At any point, if your cancer begins to grow and become aggressive, then the treatment of your choice can take place.
- With Active Surveillance, your cancer is carefully observed, tested and managed so that if it begins to progress, treatment can begin. In the meantime you have avoided treatment and side effects and continue to have an excellent quality of life.
- We urge you to talk to your doctor, research the best studies and see if active surveillance may be right for you.
- Active Surveillance differs from "watchful waiting." With "watchful waiting," the cancer might grow and cause symptoms and not be caught in time.

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The Maine Coalition to Fight Prostate Cancer is very concerned about the level of over-treatment that occurs with prostate cancer. Along with many other knowledgeable organizations, we support the emphasis on active surveillance to reduce the side effects that can occur with treatment. But, please recognize that only a doctor can tell you whether active surveillance is a viable option for you. Don't guess about your situation and don't assume you qualify for active surveillance. Please get the facts so you can make an informed decision and avoid premature death.

Maine Coalition to Fight Prostate Cancer*



www.mcfpc.org
info@mcfpc.org

60 Western Ave., Suite 254
Augusta, ME 04330

1-855-552-7200 (toll free)

Education, Awareness, Support
No Fear Based Decisions

**We do not provide medical advice, only information.*