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Men's Health

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National Men's Health Week

June 15-21, 2009

With the week of June 15-21 being recognized as National Men's Health Week, Darshan Mistry, MD, of Southwest General Medical Group, Inc., reviewed the top five health concerns every man should be aware of:

1. Heart disease
2. Stroke
3. Lung cancer
4. Depression and suicide
5. Prostate cancer

Southwest General is located at 18697 Bagley Road, in Middleburg Heights.

“Men should begin annual cholesterol screenings when they reach the age of 35.” —Dr. Mistry

by KenMcEntee

Men's chances of dying from heart disease, stroke and cancer can be significantly reduced by early detection. That's why Darshan Mistry, MD, of Southwest General Medical Group, Inc., suggests that men receive thorough evaluations at least once a year – particularly after they reach the age of 50.

“Men also should begin annual cholesterol screenings when they reach the age of 35,” Dr. Mistry advises.

With the week of June 15-21 being recognized as National Men's Health Week, Dr. Mistry reviewed the top five health concerns every man should be aware of:

- Heart disease
- Stroke
- Lung cancer
- Depression and suicide
- Prostate cancer

Heart Disease

The leading cause of death among men, heart disease has uncontrollable risk factors such as increasing age, family history and race, as well as controllable factors, including smoking, obesity, physical inactivity, high blood pressure, high cholesterol and diabetes.

“Modifying lifestyle choices like proper nutrition and exercise, can reduce your risk of heart disease,” Dr. Mistry advises. “More and more attention has been paid recently to the issue of obesity, which can cause a variety of health problems. The Body Mass Index (BMI) can give you a general idea of what your ideal weight should be based on your height.”

Stroke

Stroke is an interruption of blood flow to the brain. When a stroke occurs, brain cells that are deprived of the oxygen-carrying blood begin to die. Depending on which parts of the brain are impacted, results could include loss of sight, speech, use of muscles and limbs or death.

“The risk factors for stroke mirror the risk factors for heart disease,” Dr. Mistry explained. “If you have a high risk of having heart disease you have a high risk of having a stroke as well. Healthy lifestyle choices including proper nutrition and exercise can lower your chance of having a stroke.”

Stroke is the third leading cause of death in men, after heart disease and cancer. Among younger people, men are more likely to have a stroke than are women. But as they age, the odds of having stroke even out between the genders.

A transient ischemic attack (TIA) is a mini-stroke or “warning stroke” that produces temporary stroke-like symptoms with no lasting damage. Recognizing and treating TIAs can reduce an individual's risk of a major stroke.

Lung Cancer

Lung cancer is the leading cause of cancer death in both men and women. According to Dr. Mistry, 90 percent of lung cancer cases are related to the use of tobacco.

“Second-hand smoke is increasingly recognized as a risk factor for lung cancer,” he explains. “Exposure to asbestos, radon or air pollution also increases the risk of lung cancer.”

Depression and suicide

Men, Dr. Mistry advises, are four times more likely to commit suicide than women.

“More than six million men are impacted by depression every year,” he says. “Instead of deep sadness, depression often plays out in men through anger, aggression, risk-taking behaviors, work burnout, midlife crisis, and alcohol and substance abuse.”

Men who begin to display any of these conditions should consult their physician, Dr. Mistry says.

Prostate Cancer

Prostate cancer is the most common form of cancer found in men and the second leading cause of cancer death in men. Unfortunately, Dr. Mistry says, prostate cancer usually doesn't show any symptoms until it has spread to other parts of the body.

“An annual exam after the age of 50 is important to detect prostate cancer in its early stages,” he says. “A blood test and a digital rectal exam should be done every year. Men who have a family history of prostate cancer should begin their annual exams at an earlier age.”

Dr. Mistry notes that an enlarged prostate and prostate cancer are two separate conditions that generally don't co-exist. Noncancerous enlargement of the prostate, known as benign prostatic hyperplasia (BPH), is the most common prostate problem in men.

Dr. Mistry is a board-certified, internal medicine physician, on the Medical Staff at Southwest General. Dr. Mistry is located at the Southwest General Medical Group, Inc. Internal Medicine Practice office at 4065 Center Road, Suite 210, in Brunswick. To schedule an appointment, call 440-816-5050.