

HORMONAL THERAPY



About Prostate Cancer®

WHAT IS HORMONAL THERAPY FOR PROSTATE CANCER? Prostate cancer cells rely on the male hormone testosterone to help them grow. Hormonal therapy for prostate cancer is a type of drug treatment used to reduce testosterone in the male to very low levels. Hormonal therapy reduces symptoms and prevents further growth.

Reducing testosterone production can be achieved surgically or through the use of medications.

- **Surgery:** Testosterone levels can be reduced by removing the testicles, a procedure called an orchiectomy.
- **Medication to reduce the production of testosterone:** Injecting medications called luteinizing hormone-releasing hormones (LH-RHs) suppresses the body's natural production of testosterone.
- **An additional option that blocks the affects of all male hormones:** In this treatment option, an orchiectomy or LH-RH treatment is combined with medications called non-steroidal anti-androgens—drugs that block testosterone from the prostate and adrenal gland from reaching cancer cells. This combination adds additional block aid to male hormone effects on the growth of prostate cancer cells.

For men whose prostate cancer is more advanced and has spread to other parts of the body, hormonal therapy can help slow down the spread of cancer.

Side effects can include nausea and vomiting, hot flashes, anemia, lethargy, osteoporosis, swollen and tender breasts and erectile dysfunction. Hormonal

therapy has also been linked to heart disease and increased risk of heart attack, as well as potential increased risks of developing diabetes. If your cancer is resistant to hormonal treatments, you and your doctor may discuss chemotherapy, which consists of single drugs or a combination of several medications aimed at killing the cancer cells.

Not all prostate cancers require active treatment, and not all prostate cancers are life-threatening. The decision to proceed to active treatment is one that men should discuss in detail with their urologists to determine whether active treatment is necessary, or whether surveillance may be an option.

Choosing the right treatment for prostate cancer is an individual decision that patients should make together with their doctor. No one treatment is perfect for every man.

Talk to your doctor about which treatment is right for you.

