

**BARRIERS TO EARLY DETECTION AND TREATMENT
OF PROSTATE CANCER IN NAIROBI**

**A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED TO MOUNT KENYA UNIVERSITY SCHOOL
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ABSTRACT

Prostate cancer is a type of cancer that starts in the prostate, a walnut-sized gland found right below the bladder but only in men. (*Women cannot get prostate cancer!*). If it isn't treated, prostate cancer follows a natural course, starting as a tiny group of cancer cells that can grow into a full-blown tumor. In some men, prostate cancer that isn't treated can spread ("metastasize") and cause death.

This study was conducted in Nairobi area from April to October, 2012. The main objective being to determine the barriers to early detection and treatment of prostate cancer. The study targeted a population of 100, comprising of 15 prostate cancer patients, 50 nurses and 35 doctors. It is evident that from the study prostate cancer affects men of over 60 years (75%) of African origin. The specific risk factors included the race, age and diet. The barriers to early detection and treatment included the cost involved and lack of knowledge on where to seek treatment and when.

We know of no sure way to prevent a man from getting prostate cancer today. Every year more than 1,000 Kenyans are diagnosed with prostate cancer, and many more may have prostate cancer but not know about it. It is one of the most common forms of cancer in men around the world. Every man who lives in Kenya is at risk for prostate cancer. Prostate cancer is most common in older men (over about 60 years of age). If your father, grandfather, brother, or uncle has had prostate cancer, you are at higher risk.

A regular physical examination and a simple blood test (called a PSA test) are the keys to early diagnosis. You should start having regular physical exams and PSA tests in your mid 40s or early 50s. If you have a family history of prostate cancer, you should start having regular tests in your 40s. Early diagnosis will allow you to have early treatment, if this is necessary. If prostate cancer is diagnosed and treated early, then your risk of dying from this illness is small. If prostate cancer is diagnosed late (when it has spread to other parts of the body), then prostate cancer cannot be cured.