



UROLOGICAL SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND

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MEDIA RELEASE

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Urologists welcome Pathologists statement on PSA testing for Prostate Cancer

The Urological Society of Australia and New Zealand welcomes an editorial by the Royal College of Pathologists of Australasia which outlines the College's position on the optimal use of the serum prostate specific antigen (PSA) in testing for the likely presence of prostate cancer.

"We think this is a very significant contribution to the rational use of the PSA blood test as a preliminary test to determine the need for further testing to find significant prostate cancers," says Urological Society President, Dr Stephen Ruthven.

"While we acknowledge it is an imperfect test, the overwhelming advantage of PSA testing is that fewer men will die of prostate cancer," says Dr Ruthven.

The editorial statement, to be published online in "Pathology"¹ recommends men seeking to assess their risk of prostate cancer should be offered PSA testing and a DRE (digital rectal examination) from the age of forty years as a baseline measure.

It further recommends those men with PSA levels above the age-related median should be tested annually, while those with PSA levels below the median should be tested less frequently.

"This is largely in line with the Urological Society's position, and, as the Royal College of Pathologist's editorial points out, while the risk of cancer in these men is small, a test at this age selects those men who may be at risk and who need more frequent follow up to find cancers at a curable stage," says Dr Ruthven.

"The interval times between reassessment for those men who test below the median has not been firmly established, and a number of factors should be taken into account with each individual patient including family history," says Dr Ruthven.

The College of Pathologists recommend blood levels of PSA as "currently the best readily available biomarker for detecting prostate cancer," but as PSA levels vary slightly between methods, that "repeat testing should ideally be performed using the same methodology or the same laboratory."

¹ Prostate specific antigen testing for the diagnosis of prostate cancer. Paul McKenzie, Brett Delahunt, Kerry DeVox, Bronwen Ross, Huy Tran and Kenneth Sikaris.

“Men need to be reassured that the detection of prostate cancer does not necessarily mean surgery or radiotherapy, and many cancers can be monitored safely under an “Active Surveillance” protocol for many years without treatment,” says Dr Ruthven.

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