

Long-term finasteride doesn't impair quality of life

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(HealthDay)—Taking finasteride to prevent prostate cancer does not negatively affect the physical function, mental health, or vitality domains of health-related quality of life, according to a study published online Sept. 12 in the *Journal of the National Cancer Institute*.

Carol M. Moinpour, Ph.D., from the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center in Seattle, and colleagues examined the effect of finasteride on quality of life using data from questionnaires completed by [Prostate Cancer Prevention](#) Trial participants, who were randomized to finasteride or placebo for prevention of prostate cancer. Questionnaires were completed at enrollment (three months before randomization), six months after randomization, and annually for seven years. Three health-

related quality-of-life domains were measured using the Health Survey Short Form 36: Physical Functioning, Mental Health, and Vitality scales.

The researchers found that finasteride had minor effects on physical function, accounting for less than a one-point difference over time in physical functioning scores. There were significant negative effects on physical function for comorbidities (including [congestive heart failure](#), leg pain, and diabetes), current smoking, and time on study. There were no significant effects of finasteride on mental health and vitality at any of the three time points, either in the mixed-effects analyses or in the cross-sectional analysis.

"In conclusion, taking finasteride for seven years did not appear to harm general aspects of health-related quality of life," the authors write.

Merck Inc. provided the drug and placebo used in the study.

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