

Testicular cancer on rise in US, especially among Hispanic men

May 3 2013, by Kathleen Doheny, Healthday Reporter



Study finds slow, steady increase, but experts say condition remains uncommon.

(HealthDay)—The number of testicular cancer cases continues to climb slowly but steadily in the United States, according to new research.

While the cancer is still most common among white males, the greatest increase is among Hispanic men, according to Dr. Scott Eggener, an associate professor of surgery at the University of Chicago.

Eggener tracked the statistics on testicular cancer from 1992 through 2009, looking at data from a nationwide epidemiology database.

"The incidence of testicular cancer appears to be increasing very slowly but steadily among virtually all groups that we studied," he said. "The novel finding is that the most dramatic increase is in Hispanic men."

Eggerer can't explain the increase. He is due to present his findings Monday at the annual meeting of the American Urological Association, in San Diego. The data and conclusions should be viewed as preliminary until published in a peer-reviewed journal.

The U.S. National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases supported the study.

Testicular cancer is known as a young man's cancer, as half of the cases affect men aged 20 to 34, according to the American Cancer Society. However, [older men](#) can also be affected.

This year, the American Cancer Society expects 7,920 new cases of testicular cancer in the [United States](#). About 370 men are expected to die of it.

"It still remains an uncommon cancer," said Dr. Len Lichtenfeld, deputy chief medical officer of the [American Cancer Society](#). He reviewed the new findings. "It's important that we become aware of the situation [of rising numbers of cases], but not become alarmed by it." Hispanic men, he noted, still have a lower rate of the cancer than do [white men](#).

In his study, Eggerer found that the incidence of testicular cancer rose from 1992 through 2009. In 1992, for instance, 5.7 of every 100,000 men had testicular cancer. By 2009, that number had risen to 6.8 men for every 100,000.

Hispanic men had the largest annual percentage increase. In 1992, four of every 100,000 [Hispanic men](#) were affected. By 2009, it was 6.3 men of every 100,000, the investigators found.

For men affected, the outlook is generally good, experts agreed. "It has the highest survival rate of any solid tumor," Eggerer said. The overall

five-year survival rate, he noted, is 95 percent or higher.

Symptoms can include a painless lump on a testicle, an enlarged testicle or an achy feeling in the lower belly.

Few risk factors have been identified. One known risk factor is having an undescended testicle—one that does not move down into the scrotum at birth. In the United States, those born with an undescended testicle commonly have corrective surgery, Eggener said.

Currently, the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force, a national panel of experts, does not recommend routine testicular self-exams. It concludes that screenings performed by health care providers or men "are unlikely to provide meaningful health benefits because of the low incidence and high survival rate of testicular cancer, even when it is detected at symptomatic stages."

Nor does the cancer society recommend routine monthly self-exams, Lichtenfeld said. "Clearly the task force has looked at this very carefully and they recommend not doing testicular self-exam or any form of screening for [testicular cancer](#)."

According to the cancer society, testicular exam should be part of a routine exam by a health care provider, Lichtenfeld said.

It's important for men to pay attention to any changes in their testicles, he said.

"If a man notices a lump or a change, he should go see his doctor," Lichtenfeld said. "We have had a significant improvement in the treatment of this cancer."

More information: To learn more about testicular cancer, visit the

[American Cancer Society](#).

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