

# Gonorrhea Associated With Prostate Cancer Risk

BY SHERRY BOSCHERT  
San Francisco Bureau

SAN FRANCISCO — African American men with a history of gonorrhea were more likely to develop prostate cancer than were those without gonorrhea in a case-control study of 836 African American men, reported Aruna V. Sarma, Ph.D.

The population-based study also found associations between greater sexual activity or higher numbers of sexual partners

and an increased risk for prostate cancer, she said at the annual meeting of the American Urological Association.

Data came from a detailed in-home epidemiologic interview completed by 719 cancer-free African American men in 1996 and 117 African American men in the same county diagnosed with prostate cancer between 1996 and 2001. The questionnaire was part of the Flint (Mich.) Men's Health Study, said Dr. Sarma of the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.

The results support previous conjectures that sexual behavior and a history of sexually transmitted diseases may be related to an increased risk for prostate cancer among African American men compared with whites. African American men also get more advanced prostate cancer and have worse stage-specific survival rates than do whites.

The current analysis included men aged 40-79 years and was adjusted for differences in age, income, and education between

men with and without prostate cancer.

Men with a history of gonorrhea were 80% more likely to develop prostate cancer than were men without gonorrhea. Dr. Sarma speculated that urethral colonization by gonorrhea might trigger inflam-



**The risk of prostate cancer diagnosis was tripled in men with a history of more than 20 sexual partners.**

DR. SARMA



**Consult with a pro.** If it's congestive heart failure, the Elecsys<sup>®</sup> proBNP assay can help you be certain.



**Problem:** Early signs of congestive heart failure (CHF), such as fatigue and shortness of breath, are nonspecific, making diagnosis difficult. In fact, studies show that primary care physicians misdiagnose heart failure up to 75% of the time.<sup>1,2,3</sup>

**Proactive solution:** The Elecsys proBNP test delivers a negative predictive value ranging from 97.8% to 100% so you can quickly rule out CHF. An elevated proBNP value is an unambiguous warning sign.

**Proven performance:** Cleared as an aid in diagnosing CHF and risk stratification<sup>4</sup> in CHF and Acute Coronary Syndrome, the Elecsys proBNP test has become a valuable weapon in the fight against America's #1 killer. And it can be performed in your office or through your reference lab.

Proactive. Proven. Elecsys proBNP. The shortest distance between symptom and diagnosis.

For more information, visit [www.proBNP.com](http://www.proBNP.com) or call toll-free 1-877-762-4366. It's really all about life.

 Diagnostics

<sup>1</sup> McKee PA et al. The natural history of congestive heart failure: the Framingham study. *N Engl J Med* 1971; 285:1441-6.

<sup>2</sup> Remes JM, Reunanen APK. Validity of clinical diagnosis of heart failure in primary health care. *Eur Heart J* 1991; 12:315-321.

<sup>3</sup> Struthers AD. The diagnosis of heart failure. *Heart* 2000; 84:334-338.

<sup>4</sup> James SK, et al. N-Terminal Pro-Brain Natriuretic Peptide and Other Risk Markers for the Separate Prediction of Mortality and Subsequent Myocardial Infarction in Patients with Unstable Coronary Artery Disease: A Global Utilization of Strategies to Open Occluded Arteries (GUSTO) IV Substudy. *Circulation* 2003; 108(3):275.

ELECSYS is a trademark of a Member of the Roche Group.

© 2004 Roche Diagnostics. All rights reserved. 491-24041-1004

matory mediators that could increase the risk for prostate cancer.

Men with other sexually transmitted diseases also showed increased risks for prostate cancer (a 50% increase in men with syphilis, a 20% increase in men with herpes) compared with men without those diseases, but these associations were not statistically significant.

The risk of being diagnosed with prostate cancer was tripled in men with a history of more than 20 sexual partners, compared with men reporting 5 or fewer sexual partners. A prostate cancer diagnosis also was three times more common in men who said they had sex two to three times per month or per week than in men who said they had no sexual activity in the past 12 months. ■

## Bicillin Labels Changed to Avoid Confusion

King Pharmaceuticals Inc. and the Food and Drug Administration are warning physicians about the inappropriate use of Bicillin C-R (penicillin G benzathine and penicillin G procaine injectable suspension) for the treatment of syphilis.

Bicillin L-A (penicillin G benzathine injectable suspension) is the only currently approved penicillin G benzathine product indicated for use in sexually transmitted infections such as syphilis.

The company has received postmarketing reports from several STD clinics in the United States where Bicillin C-R was used instead of Bicillin L-A to treat patients with syphilis.

The company is changing the packaging and syringe labels of Bicillin C-R to highlight the distinction between that product and Bicillin L-A.

There also have been reports of inadvertent intravenous administration of both drugs, which has been associated with cardiorespiratory arrest and death. The correct way to administer both drugs is by deep intramuscular injection. The warning sections of both labels have been changed to more prominently emphasize proper administration.

For more information, contact King Pharmaceuticals by calling 800-546-4905.

—Kerri Wachter