

Men with wives, significant others more likely to be screened for prostate cancer

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Although the link between early screening and prostate cancer survival is well established, men are less likely to go for early screening unless they have a wife or significant other living with them, according to a study published in *Cancer Epidemiology, Biomarkers and Prevention*, a journal of the American Association for Cancer Research.

"In terms of motivating people to get screened, there may be benefit in targeting wives or significant others as well as men," said lead author Lauren P. Wallner, M.P.H., a graduate research associate at the University of Michigan.

Prostate cancer is the second leading cause of cancer deaths among men in the United States, and early detection is associated with drastically improved five-year survival rates. However, what motivates a man to get screened is not known.

Wallner and colleagues identified 2,447 Caucasian men ages 40 years to 79 years from Olmstead County, Minnesota. These men completed questionnaires containing queries on family history of prostate cancer, concern about getting prostate cancer and marital status.

If men had a family history of prostate cancer, they were 50 percent more likely to be screened. If men said they were worried about prostate cancer, they were nearly twice as likely to be screened.

However, the likelihood among men with a family history to get

screened decreased if they lived alone. Specifically, men who lived alone were 40 percent less likely to be screened than those who were married or had a significant other in their home.

Wallner said the study did not assess what caused a married man to be more likely to be screened. She also said that further studies would need to examine this effect in non-Caucasian populations.

Source: American Association for Cancer Research

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