

# **IMPACT**

## **Prostate Cancer Decisions**

### **How do I Decide What Treatment is Best for Me?**

Now that you've been told that you have prostate cancer, you may need to have some tests to determine your treatment options. These tests may help your doctor determine the stage of your cancer (See IMPACT STAGING for more information). Knowing what stage your cancer is at will help you and your doctor decide on your treatment options. For example: If your test results show that you have early stage prostate cancer, meaning that it has not spread outside of your prostate, you will decide with your doctor, what treatment is best for you. You and your doctor will talk about surgery, radiation therapy or watchful waiting. You may decide to consult with a radiation doctor (also known as a radiation oncologist or radiation therapist) about these treatments if you have not already done this. This can be a scary and overwhelming process. You may feel that you don't know enough information about these treatments to make this important decision. However, the treatment you chose will affect your body in many different ways, so it is important for you to have a say in what happens to you. Your doctor is there

to help you with the decision. Your nurse case manager can help if you do not understand the information the doctor gives you.

First it is important that you and your partner to learn about prostate cancer and how it is treated. Your nurse case manager has information to give to you. Your doctor can answer questions that you may have as you look at this information. If you are near a library, you may want to take out books on prostate cancer or look on the Internet. Some things you may want to know are:

- ◆ How long will I be out of work?
- ◆ How will I feel during and after treatment(s)?
- ◆ What side effects will I have and how long will they last?
- ◆ Will I have trouble with my bowel movements during or after treatment and for how long?
- ◆ Will I have trouble with urination (peeing) during or after treatment and for how long?
- ◆ Will my sex life change?
- ◆ Can the cancer come back after my treatment?
- ◆ If the cancer comes back, are other treatments possible after this treatment?
- ◆ If I don't have any treatment or choose watchful waiting, what will happen?

You may also want to talk with other men who have been treated for prostate cancer to learn what it was like for them. Your nurse case manager has a list of free prostate cancer support groups or other men like you who have prostate cancer. But remember, everyone is different and what was good for someone else may not be what is best for you.

### **What is Important to Me?**

After you have learned about prostate cancer, you will need to look at what it means to you and your family. You can do this by listing the things that are important to you. These can be things like your family, your job, your relationship with your partner, how you feel about yourself, being healthy, or anything else that is important. Then look at how each treatment might affect these things. For example, for some men, the most important thing is to remove the cancer, for others it is having a good sex life. Only you and the people closest to you can decide on what is most important for you to consider.

Remember, it can help you to talk to someone during this decision-making process. This can be your doctor, wife, partner, friends, minister, doctor, nurse case

manager, or another man who has had prostate cancer. Whatever decision you make, it should be up to you.