

Prostate cancer is responsible for 7% of all male cancers and is the most common malignant tumor of the male genitourinary tract. By 80 years of age, 80% of men show some degree of adenocarcinoma within the gland, although it may be asymptomatic and dormant. Tumors are rarely found in patients less than 60 years of age. Symptomatic patients usually show symptoms of bladder outflow obstruction, and in some cases the disease can present as acute retention of urine. Other features may include ureteric obstruction, hydronephrosis, or bone pain due to metastases. Depending on the tumor stage, management steps and options include repeated digital rectal exam and prostate specific antigen(PSA) measurements, prostatectomy, radiotherapy, orchidectomy and anti-androgens. Localized tumors have an 80% 5-year survival rate, local spread, 40%, and patients with metastases have a 20% rate of survival after 5 years.

The American Cancer Society predicts that 234,460 new cases of prostate cancer will be diagnosed in the United States in 2006. A recent study by the International Agency for Research on Cancer in Lyon, France, has reported an incidence of 2,060,400 cancer cases in the European Union for 2004(1). Prostate cancer accounted for 18.1% of these new cases, at an incidence of 202,100 cases, and was the most common cancer reported in men for that year. Such statistics have in recent years sparked increasing interest in prostate cancer and pushed for deeper investigation into its etiology and pathogenesis. This paper aims to review some of the risk factors currently being studied for prostate cancer, as a clear etiology has not been found and in some areas, data and reports have been conflicting.