

Research and Prostate Cancer

By Jaci Holland



As a nurse working in cancer prevention and early detection I receive many questions about cancer research. This is field that is a mystery to many people and the mystery is connected to a lack of knowledge. As of today, there are ten million Americans who have survived cancer and the number is increasing daily. Without research this would not be possible. Research is simply the work being done to find answers about cancer incidence, cancer diagnosis, cancer treatment and survivorship.

An organization called the American Association For Cancer Research has developed a program to de-mystify cancer research. The program is called the Scientist Survivor Program. This program pairs cancer advocates and survivors with scientists during meetings and conferences to assist the participants in understanding the world of research. The program also provides the opportunity for the scientists to understand the cancer picture from the viewpoint of survivors and advocates which in turn gives them more perspective as they continue their research. I have had the opportunity to participate in this program in Atlanta, Georgia and San Diego, California. I presented a poster at the annual meeting of AACR in San Diego describing my role as a nurse in cancer advocacy.

AACR was founded in 1907 by a group of 11 physicians and scientists interested in research, "to further the investigation and spread the knowledge of cancer." Today, the AACR accelerates progress toward the prevention and cure of cancer by promoting research, education, communication and advocacy. The AACR is the oldest and largest scientific organization in the world focused on every aspect of high-quality, innovative cancer research. Its reputation for scientific breadth and excellence attract the premier researchers in the field. The programs and services of the AACR foster the exchange of knowledge and new ideas among scientists dedicated to cancer research, provide training opportunities for the next generation of cancer researchers, and increase public understanding of cancer.¹ In our fight against prostate cancer it is important that we understand the contribution that others have made that enables us to speak about survivorship. Clinical trials (studies involving people) that test new tools for diagnoses and cancer treatments are the reason why we have so many survivors today. Our survivors are actually standing on the shoulders of those men who participated in studies to find newer, more efficient and successful ways to treat prostate cancer.

If you are interested in a presentation on clinical trials and their affect upon prostate cancer, please contact the Diversity Enhancement Program at The Ohio State University Comprehensive Cancer Center, The James Cancer Hospital by calling 1-800-293-5066 or going online at www.jamesline.com/patientsandvisitors/support/diversity. Health professionals offer the presentations at no charge.