So your prostate specific antigen (PSA) reading is higher than you’d like, perhaps even rising suspiciously, and your urologist has ordered a biopsy, which proved negative. Now it is time to breathe a sigh of relief—and to get a reality check.

What to do next?

Well, first of all, you are not alone. Every older man is aware of prostate health issues. The prostate plays a major role in men’s health, including affecting his urinary flow, sexual function, enjoyment of life and ability to travel. But today, unfortunately, millions of men have experienced similar prostate problems.

What is the PSA anyway? According to PSA Rising, a cancer survivors’ group, “The PSA test is a simple blood test to measure how much PSA a man has in his bloodstream at a given time. The PSA test is the most effective test currently available for the early detection of prostate cancer. Since the PSA test came into use in the United States, the death rate for prostate cancer has fallen by one-third. In 2005, a Harvard study found that men who have a yearly PSA test are nearly three times less likely to die from prostate cancer than those who don’t have annual screenings. The University of Pittsburgh Cancer Institute says PSA testing and digital rectal examination (DRE) ‘are crucial in detecting prostate cancer in its early stages, when it usually produces no physical symptoms.’ PSA testing is also used to monitor the progress of prostate cancer that has already been diagnosed.”

As many men know, an elevated or rising PSA can signal potential problems down the road. Suspicious cells can become rogue. That’s why your urologist could recommend frequent biopsies.

But on the other hand, extreme treatment isn’t always the right way to go. Even in recent times it has not been uncommon for men treated with radiation to experience secondary cancers. Yet, we also know that dietary changes, including more flaxseed for example, exercise and use of specific herb combinations can provide great health support.

This might be a good time to support your prostate health and use an effective herbal support formula.

Researchers writing in The Journal of Urology (2002;168;6:2505-09) say, “Complementary therapies are used by a large number of patients.”

In a study in the November 2003 issue of Urology, researchers noted that in their study of prostate health patients, “Almost one-third (29.8 percent) reported using complementary and alternative medicine (CAM)...”

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by L. Stephen Coles, M.D., Ph.D.

High PSA, Negative Biopsy, Now What?

THE RESEARCHER WHO DISCOVERED HOW PLANTS BENEFIT MEN’S HEALTH

Molecular biologist Mirko Beljanski, Ph.D. may well have discovered the answer to a negative biopsy with rising PSA during 25 years of research of research at the Pasteur Institute in Paris, France, one of the most prestigious laboratories in the world. During his research he discovered two plant extracts, Pao pereira and Rauwolfia vomitoria, that act at the cellular level to help the body rid itself of damaged cells. Beljanski published some 133 peer-reviewed articles over his lifetime, including those that demonstrated the profound benefits to cellular DNA that could be obtained with ingestion of these plant extracts. His formulas have become available in the United States and their use for just such conditions is likely to grow as result of a recently published study—and as preliminary results become known of a just-completed clinical trial on these two extracts conducted at Columbia University’s Physicians and Surgeons Hospital.
THE NEW YORK DOCTOR WHO PIONEERED THEIR USE

Dr. Aaron Katz, one of New York’s leading urological surgeons according to New York magazine, recently conducted a series of studies and a clinical trial at the Columbia University Center for Holistic Urology looking at Beljanski’s two extracts. Dr. Katz is director of the center, which is based at the Physicians and Surgeons Hospital at Columbia.

“Initially, I learned about Beljanski’s extracts from my patients who were taking them for prostate conditions and using them for effectively lowering their PSAs,” said Dr. Katz, “and it wasn’t just one patient; it was a lot of patients. So I said you know what? Maybe there’s something to this. Maybe this is real.”

Dr. Katz recalls, “[Beljanski’s] science was excellent and definitely many decades ahead of his time. He was definitely the first to open up the whole field of structural DNA and in this alone, his vision of the secrets of life was wholly unique and powerful. The next step was to take Beljanski’s body of work and study it clinically…”

The Columbia team’s preclinical findings were published this year in the Spring 2009 issue of the Journal of the Society for Integrative Oncology (7,2:59-65). Dr. Debra Bemis and co-researchers from the Center for Holistic Urology reported that, “Bark extracts from the Amazonian rainforest tree, Geissospermum vellosii (Pao pereira), enriched in beta-carboline alkaloids, have significant anticancer activities in certain preclinical models. Because of the predominance of prostate cancer as a cause of cancer-related morbidity and mortality for men of Western countries, we preclinically tested the in vitro and in vivo effects of a Pao pereira extract against a prototypical human prostate cancer cell line, LNCaP. When added to cultured LNCaP cells, Pao pereira extract significantly suppressed cell growth in a dose-dependent fashion and induced apoptosis.”

This study, of course, comes on the heels of another study published in the November 2006 issue of the International Journal of Oncology (29.5:1065-73) regarding the Rauwolfia vomitoria extract. Again, Dr. Bemis and other top researchers reported on the highly beneficial inhibition exhibited in vitro and in vivo.

These results led the Center for Holistic Urology at Physicians & Surgeons Hospital to conduct a recently completed clinical trial.

The clinical trial, which began in 2006, enrolled some 42 patients with elevated PSAs (averaging 8 to 10 on the PSA scale) and a negative biopsy—a group of men that numbers in the millions worldwide. Dr. Katz looked at quality of life issues and how the formula affects urinary function. Hopefully, final findings will be available soon, since Dr. Katz has informed me that the study is completed with all results. Here is what we do know: “I think there are some things we can safely say that we are seeing and that we can speak about generally,” says Dr. Katz. “We now know that this combination of Beljanski’s extracts (Prostabel®) can significantly lower PSAs in a twelve-month period. Also, we found a number of patients who have had a dramatic improvement in their urinary symptoms. Men are clearly having less frequency, better streams and better flow rates. They are not getting up as often during the night.

“All of this quite apparent improvement in their urinary flow and prostate problems has been an interesting finding for us. We simply did not expect to see so much help for enlarged prostates (since we’re also examining the ability of the extracts to interact with cells at the DNA level). But I am very encouraged. We have even been going up to eight pills a day without adverse events. Nobody has dropped out of the trial from side effects either, which shows a lot since you almost always have a few dropouts even on placebo.”

So how important are Beljanski’s findings to men’s health? “There are a lot of men undergoing PSA screening,” Dr. Katz said. “The PSA supposedly stands for prostate specific antigen, but I say it is more accurately, ‘patient stimulated anxiety.’ When men’s PSA is elevated, there could be many reasons for this, having nothing to do with cancer. One of the more common reasons is that the prostate has grown in a benign fashion. The more prostate cells you have, the more PSA that gets into your bloodstream.”

In this case, men have a very viable option to help support their health and do something positive. They should definitely work with their doctor, improve their diet, add flaxseed for example, and omega-3 fatty acids, but I would urge a serious look at these two extracts, particularly in just such situations. This combination offers real benefits, based on real science.