the patients in the study experienced increased to 54 months. Overall, 83% of treatment, the PSA doubling time had increased to 37 months. After nearly three years of year, the PSA doubling time had increased to 25 months. By drinking pomegranate juice months. By drinking pomegranate juice per day. Of 46 patients who completed the study, 16 (35%) experienced a decrease in PSA, which on average was 27% lower than at the start of the study. For some time now, many patients believed that pomegranate juice, due to a large concentration of antioxidants, was a potent anti-cancer agent. However, until this study was published, there was no supporting evidence. The study looked at men with rising PSA following surgery or radiation therapy who drank 8 oz. of pomegranate juice per day. Of 46 patients who completed the study, 16 (35%) experienced a decrease in PSA, which on average was 27% lower than at the start of the study. For the remaining patients, there was a prolongation of the time it took for the PSA to double. The average PSA doubling time before beginning the study was 15 months. By drinking pomegranate juice for just over a year, the PSA doubling time increased to 25 months. By the second year, the PSA doubling time had increased to 37 months. After nearly three years of treatment, the PSA doubling time had increased to 54 months. Overall, 83% of the patients in the study experienced a decrease in PSA. The average PSA doubling time before beginning the study was 15 months. By drinking pomegranate juice for just over a year, the PSA doubling time increased to 25 months. By the second year, the PSA doubling time had increased to 37 months. After nearly three years of treatment, the PSA doubling time had increased to 54 months. Overall, 83% of the patients in the study experienced a decrease in PSA.

Introducing The Mount Sinai Men's Wellness Program
Caring for the Whole Man

The readers of this newsletter have come to rely upon the excellence of the world-class prostate specialists at The Deane Prostate Center. We are now proud to announce another valuable resource for our patients: The Mount Sinai Men's Wellness Program, which will serve men in cooperation with The Deane Center. Led by Natan Bar-Chama, MD (pictured at left, below), of the Mount Sinai Department of Urology, and Ronald Tamler, MD (at right), of the Division of Endocrinology and Diabetes, the program is designed to look beyond the boundaries of specific medical specialties in order to provide comprehensive, multidisciplinary care for men with low testosterone, erectile dysfunction, osteoporosis, andropause (male menopause), and many other urologic and metabolic conditions.

Dr. Bar-Chama is Associate Professor of Urology and Obstetrics/Gynecology at Mount Sinai Medical School. He specializes in infertility and erectile dysfunction. Dr. Tamler is an internist and Instructor of Medicine at Mount Sinai, specializing in endocrinology, diabetes, and bone diseases. He is also Board-Certified as a nutrition-support physician. Dr. Bar-Chama and Dr. Tamler will see patients jointly, creating a unique synergy with their backgrounds in urology and sexual health, and endocrinology and nutrition support, respectively. They will also work closely with other departments at Mount Sinai Hospital, particularly the Department of Cardiology and the Weight Management Program. The Mount Sinai Men's Wellness Program is the only program of its kind in the New York area.

According to the Men's Health Network, a nonprofit educational organization dedicated to promoting men's health programs, men die on average 6 years earlier than women. They are also more likely to die from heart disease and cancer. "If you look at the statistics, from a health and longevity perspective, men might be viewed as the weaker sex," notes Dr. Bar-Chama. "To address this situation, we recognized that it was important to create a multidisciplinary approach that utilizes the expertise of a variety of specialists to look beyond simply urological problems and treat the male patient as a whole."

Simon J. Hall, MD, Chairman of Mount Sinai's Department of Urology and Director of The Deane Center, welcomes the new program. "The Men's Wellness Program is an important addition to the services provided to our patients by The Deane Center. For patients suffering from diseases of the prostate, including cancer, we will now be able to offer comprehensive medical evaluations and multi-specialty care to address issues associated with treatment."

As an endocrinologist and nutrition-support physician, Dr. Tamler is well qualified to diagnose and treat the potential side effects of prostate cancer therapy. For example, patients...
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an extension of their PSA doubling time. Testosterone levels, which were monitored in all patients during the study, did not change, indicating that outcome was not mediated by any change in hormone activity.

As with most studies, various factors should be considered before coming to any solid conclusions about the effectiveness of pomegranate juice as treatment for prostate cancer. This particular study did not compare pomegranate juice to another treatment or placebo. It is difficult to judge the validity of the results without a parallel comparison to another treatment, or no intervention at all. It is also important to bear in mind that average PSA for study participants at the beginning of the trial was already very low (1.05 ng/mL). It is unclear how this treatment would affect men with higher disease burdens, as evidenced by higher PSA, or men with metastatic prostate cancer.

On the positive side, this is one of the first dietary intervention studies to actually demonstrate a positive impact on PSA levels. PSA doubling times have demonstrated significant prognostic implications for men both before and after treatment; the longer the PSA doubling times, the better the prognosis.

However, the FDA has yet to consider reduction in PSA levels or PSA doubling times as a true indicator of therapeutic benefit. Only longer-term studies that look at time to development of metastatic disease or disease-free survival will establish therapeutic benefit. Ultimately, a larger study with a placebo-controlled arm, which is currently in the planning stage, will undoubtedly prove helpful in determining if pomegranate juice can play a role in the treatment of prostate cancer.

Certainly, this study seems to suggest that pomegranate juice offers the potential for having a positive impact on prostate cancer with no significant toxicity. So I see no major drawback to drinking a glass of pomegranate juice every day, along with eating a well-balanced diet.

Simon J. Hall, MD
Director, The Deane Prostate Health and Research Center
Chairman, Department of Urology, Mount Sinai Medical Center

News From The Deane Center

Daily News  FREE PSA Testing

During the week of June 18-25, the Deane Prostate Health Center screened 767 men for prostate cancer in conjunction with a city-wide Daily News PSA Screening promotion. Radio and television ads publicized the event. The program ran simultaneously at three Manhattan sites, including the Mount Sinai Sports Therapy Center in midtown and Mount Sinai’s main campus, as well as North General Hospital in Harlem.

The Deane Center also screened 141 men on June 25th at Yankee Stadium, when the Yankees played the Florida Marlins. Many thanks to the 25 volunteers who helped make the event such a success. This event was sponsored by The Deane Center, The Starr Foundation, and The Foundation for Medical Evaluation and Early Detection.

Men over 40 should be tested annually for prostate cancer. Prostate cancer is second only to lung cancer as a leading cause of cancer death in men. If caught early, it can be successfully treated in about 90% of cases.
Evaluating Health Information Web Sites

With the popularity of the Internet as an information resource, the public now has access to a seemingly endless number of Web sites that provide health information. The Internet can be an invaluable research tool. However, it is essential to be an informed consumer and understand how to evaluate whether or not a site is reputable and can be trusted. Distinguishing between reliable and misleading or incorrect information is often difficult for a person who is not a medical professional.

According to Michael Diefenbach, PhD, a health psychologist at The Deane Center, efforts are being made to ensure that information featured on health-related Web sites is clear and reliable. A voluntary system developed by the Health on the Net Foundation (HON) (www.hon.ch) offers guidelines for ensuring that medical information presented on Web sites is accurate and clearly presented. Organizations that follow the HON criteria are allowed to display the HON Seal of Approval.

Dr. Diefenbach offers some suggestions below for evaluating the quality of a site.

**Authority:** Is the author of the material clearly noted and medically trained, or is there a reference to a medical advisory or editorial board? Is the author an established and well-regarded medical professional? Are the credentials of the author noted? Is there a response mechanism to provide feedback, or request additional information or support? If you are unable to identify the source of the information, do not trust the information.

**Site Affiliation/Funding/Sponsorship:** Support for the Web site will be clearly noted, including the identity of commercial and noncommercial organizations that contributed funding. Check the Web address (URL) for clues. Web addresses for colleges and universities usually end in “edu,” while a “~” usually indicates a personal Web directory. Is the organization well known and highly regarded? Use sources from well-established publishers or organizations.

**Quality of Information:** Is the information presented in an in-depth, orderly, well thought out manner? Is the site updated frequently so all information is current? Check when it was last updated. Are the pages easy to navigate? Are there valid links to other resources? Do all the links work? Are references listed? Is the content original, or is the site just a collection of material gathered from other sites?

More information about evaluating a health information Web site can be found at www.hon.ch/HONcode/Conduct.html. Be advised that not all Web sites submit to this voluntary system. Many sites offer valuable information but might meet only a few of the suggested criteria.

“Ultimately, it is still up to the patient to decide whether the information offered at a site is trustworthy and reliable,” says Dr. Diefenbach. “For example, Web sites sponsored by pharmaceutical companies or by advocacy groups may present information in a biased, less balanced manner. Of course, always bear in mind that the information provided on any Web site is designed to improve, not replace, the relationship between a patient and his/her own personal physician.”

**Recommended Web Sites:**

  A government-sponsored site that provides comprehensive information about all types of cancer, including treatment information, ongoing research, and clinical trials.

  One of the best sources for up-to-date, reliable health information from the National Library of Medicine, which is part of the National Institutes of Health.

- [www.cancer.org](http://www.cancer.org) American Cancer Society
  A nationwide community-based organization that supports cancer research, education, advocacy, and patient services.

- [www.cancercare.org](http://www.cancercare.org) CancerCare
  A national nonprofit organization that provides free professional support services and practical information to individuals and family members affected by cancer.

- [www.nccn.org](http://www.nccn.org) National Comprehensive Cancer Network
  An alliance of 20 of the world’s leading cancer centers, this nonprofit organization creates clinical practice guidelines for use by patients, clinicians, and other healthcare decision makers. In 1999, NCCN developed a set of prostate cancer guidelines, which can be accessed on the site.

**Additional Web Sites: Urology/Prostate**

- [www.pcaw.com](http://www.pcaw.com) Prostate Cancer Education Council
- [www.fightprostatecancer.org](http://www.fightprostatecancer.org) National Prostate Cancer Coalition
- [www.ustoo.com](http://www.ustoo.com) UsToo
- [www.urolgyhealth.org](http://www.urolgyhealth.org) American Urological Association
being treated for prostate cancer with testosterone deprivation experience a condition called hypogonadism, which can predispose these men to diabetes and have a negative impact on lipid profile, ultimately leading to cardiovascular disease.

The physicians at The Deane Center and The Men’s Wellness Program also recognize that erectile dysfunction (impotence) unrelated to prostate cancer treatment frequently is a marker for cardiovascular disease and a precursor of heart attacks or strokes. Often, the onset of erectile dysfunction precedes a heart attack by several years. Patients with diabetes, high blood pressure, and obesity often suffer from erectile dysfunction and are at high risk for cardiovascular disease.

Another major risk for men with low levels of testosterone is a higher incidence of brittle bones. This condition is called osteopenia, or in more severe cases, osteoporosis, and dramatically increases the likelihood of fractures. Once a fracture occurs, the mortality rate within the first year for men is twice that seen in women. However, the onset of these problems can be delayed, or treated effectively, by an endocrinologist and/or a cardiologist in order to reduce risk.

“The risk of fractures in these patients can easily be assessed with a bone mineral test,” explains Dr. Tamler. “And we can prescribe powerful medications to stop the bone loss. We provide our patients with a referral so they can have the test right here at Mount Sinai, without an appointment, the very same day they are seen at The Deane Center. Treatment is then coordinated by The Deane Center and The Men’s Wellness Program.”

The potential link between erectile dysfunction and other conditions is illustrated by the recent case of a young patient complaining of erectile dysfunction. While many physicians would have simply sent the man home with a prescription for a medication such as Viagra®, Dr. Bar-Chama and Dr. Tamler not only discovered low testosterone levels, they also diagnosed the patient with metabolic syndrome. This condition, which frequently precedes the onset of diabetes and coronary artery disease, is defined by a combination of being overweight, particularly around the stomach area, and having high blood pressure, a poor lipid profile, and elevated blood sugar. “This young man is now making significant lifestyle changes,” notes Dr. Bar-Chama. “He is determined to lose weight to prevent or delay the onset of symptoms of diabetes and cardiovascular disease, as well as to enhance his sexual relationship with his partner.”

To make an appointment for a consultation at The Mount Sinai Men’s Wellness Program, call 212.241.7020, or ask about the program when you visit with your physician at The Deane Center.