

# Prostate Cancer Support Group - Northern Beaches

Affiliated with the Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia

Proudly sponsored by Hammond Care, Health and Hospitals Limited  
*A program of support serving men of all ages, their families, carers and friends  
before, during and after diagnosis*

**Newsletter No. 163 - January 2017**

Editor: Mary Jones

**The first meeting for 2017 will be held on**

**Tuesday, 7 February 2017**

**Our guest speaker will be Gillian Marcham, Physiotherapist**

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## Monthly Meetings

All people are welcome to attend our regular monthly meetings. No notice is required - simply come along and introduce yourself, or contact us via the website.

### When:

Meetings of our support group are held on the 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday of the month except in January.

### Usual Location:

The Cottage, Mona Vale Hospital, Coronation Street, Mona Vale.

Time: 6:30pm till 8:30pm

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## February Meeting

We welcome Gill Marcham, Physiotherapist, to our first meeting for 2017. Gill has a wealth of experience in incontinence issues and will update us on new techniques which have come about through enhanced imaging enabling the identification of the use of different muscles.

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## December Meeting Report

Our December Christmas meeting was enjoyed by all and concluded a very successful year where we were able to get out and promote prostate cancer awareness and raise funds for much needed research. A big thank you to all who contributed and made a big difference to prostate cancer on the Northern Beaches.

We welcomed many new members to our group and look forward to a great year in 2017.

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## Prostate Cancer: How treatment has improved

*Extracts from the Financial Review - Jan 9 2017*

When professor of urology at The Royal Melbourne Hospital, Professor Tony Costello opened a recent conference on prostate cancer in Melbourne he told delegates he'd been going through his father's old medical textbooks.

His father had been a general practitioner and his well-thumbed textbook on surgery, published in 1940, had very little to offer on the subject of prostate cancer.

It said the condition could cause "constant pain" and the likelihood of a man surviving it was "very poor". While there had been successful cases of removing a cancerous prostate, the text observed darkly that the mortality of such an operation was "considerable".

Costello then jumped a generation and produced the textbook he had used as a trainee surgeon in the 1970s. It offered no more light, saying that

"radical cure by surgery plays a very small part in the management of the condition". Today surgery is the mainstay of treatment and, in Australia, 95 per cent of men diagnosed with prostate cancer are alive five years later.

In spite of every endeavour, for most of the last century it was not possible to diagnose prostate cancer early with 40 per cent of patients presenting only after it had spread to the bones.

Then Charles Huggins, a Nobel Prize-winning Canadian urologist, discovered that testosterone feeds prostate cancer. As a result, from 1950 until 2004, castration became the gold standard for men with advanced disease. Those who couldn't face it could opt for medical castration, which meant taking high doses of the female hormone oestrogen and enduring its challenging side effects.

Then, in the mid-80s, Professor Patrick Walsh from Johns Hopkins in Baltimore, US, devised a safe form of radical prostatectomy. He described the anatomy and location of the neurovascular bundle which surgeons had previously cut through, destroying erectile nerves.

In the early 1990s came another breakthrough that would have a profound effect on the management of the disease. It was a blood test which allowed a nine-year lead time from diagnosis to advanced disease. The now-famous PSA test measured the level of a protein in the blood called prostate specific antigen. It allowed urologists to perform safer surgery with minimal blood loss, a low likelihood of incontinence, and the potential to spare erectile nerves in some men.

Today, however, it is acknowledged that there was an over enthusiasm for PSA testing, which led to a 400 per cent rise in radical prostate surgery.

As a result, many men were over-treated. It also led to much greater awareness of the disease. Men who never knew where their prostate was, or what it did in the body, were finding out and talking about it.

One of Australia's leading prostate cancer pathologists, Professor Ronnie Cohen, of the University of Western Australia, saw the startling consequences of PSA on his laboratory bench. The removed tissue was routinely sent for pathology and Cohen says at least half of those with cancer already had metastatic disease and went on to the mainstay treatment of hormone or radiation therapy.

"Today, we rarely see metastatic disease. We see early disease and surgery is the mainstay of

treatment – I think you can attribute that to PSA."

PSA use is now more sophisticated and the rush to surgery has been tempered by a standardised form of vigilance.

Professor Henry Woo began practising as a urologist in 1994, just as PSA testing was coming on line in Australia. He experienced the boom in surgery and says that, although urologists appeared to be "harvesting prostates", they were acting in good faith. Woo estimates 25 to 30 per cent of men who had surgery during the rush could have been managed conservatively.

Besides PSA, the 1990s saw another major development – minimally invasive, keyhole surgery for prostate cancer. Beyond 1995, rather than opening a man up, the prostate could be removed laparoscopically. In 2003, the first keyhole robotic prostate operation was performed in Australia. Costello was at the controls for the first patient at Melbourne's Epworth Hospital. The technologically superior robotics quickly superseded the laparoscopic version. This century has seen many other improvements in areas such as imaging and radiation.

The recent US Cancer Moonshot initiative (to identify new ways to identify, diagnose and treat cancer) may herald immune therapeutics, which have worked so well in melanoma. While this is unlikely to cure prostate cancer, Costello says it may help to lengthen longevity for men at the end of the road.

"Our aim is to induce a state of prolonged cancer remission with occasional targeted therapeutic intervention."

See the full article at <http://tinyurl.com/zg92bgv>

## Does alcohol cause prostate cancer?

by Wendy Winnall, 21 November 2016

It seems that not a day goes by without a new media story claiming that something either causes or prevents cancer. The latest of these stories reports a scientific publication claiming that alcohol consumption is associated with prostate cancer. The study found that regular consumption of even small amounts of alcohol were associated with an increased risk of dying from prostate cancer. Do we need to give up all alcohol now?

To read more about this article go to –

<http://onlinecommunity.pcfa.org.au/research-blog>

**Not a member of the online community yet?**

Go to <http://onlinecommunity.pcfa.org.au>

and click on the JOIN tab. *It's easy* and you will be rewarded with so much information at your fingertips. Or go to <http://tinyurl.com/zynty6p>

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### Norma's January Quiz

1. Is a pachyderm a skin infection, an elephant, a butterfly or a moth?
2. Do most of the world's diamonds come from India, South Africa, Russia or Canada?
3. What is a grissini?
4. Where is the largest train station (by platforms) situated?
5. Ombrology is a study of what?
6. Who sang "Peggy Sue" and "That'll be the Day"?
7. Apia is the capitol of which country?
8. Bananas are rich in which vital nutrient?
9. What group name is given to a group of owls?
10. What is the best way to pass a geometry exam?

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### Norma's Answers – November Quiz

1. What is the Christmas link between Pope Adrian 1st, Dean Martin, WC Fields and Charlie Chaplin? *All died on Christmas Day*
2. Which of these pulled Cinderella's coach? 8 horses, 4 rats, 6 white mice or 12 elves? *6 white mice*
3. Who wrote The Nutcracker Suite, a Christmas ballet? *Peter Tchaikovsky*
4. In which country did the Advent calendar originate? *Germany*
5. Which spice is most often used when making eggnog? *Nutmeg*
6. Who wrote the story 'A Christmas Carol'? *Charles Dickens*
7. Which one of these is NOT one of Santa's reindeers? Vixen, Donna or Comet? *Donna*
8. A host of what announced the forthcoming birth of Christ? *Angels*
9. How do you spell the Xmas plant, poinsettia or poinsettia? *Poinsettia*
10. What colour is The Grinch and who played him in the movie? *Green, Jim Carey*
11. Who was the Roman Emperor in the Holy Land at that First Christmas? *Caesar Augustus*
12. Do reindeers have scent glands in their hind toes so that they can leave a trail for the herd? *YES*
13. What colour Christmas does Elvis Presley sing about, white red, blue or black? *BLUE*
14. Which drink company first used Santa Claus in their advertisement, Pepsi, Fanta, 7Up or Coca Cola? *Coca Cola*
15. Which weather condition starts just after Christmas, Christmas monsoon, Aurora Australis or El Nino? *El Nina/Nino*

16. What is New Year's Eve called in Scotland? *Hogmanay*
17. In The Wizard of Oz what was Dorothy's dog called? *Toto*
18. What is a baby turkey called besides "chick"? *Poult*
19. Which "Play it again Sam" actor was born on Christmas Day? *Humphrey Bogart*
20. Who wrote the songs for the film White Christmas? *Irvine Berlin*

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### Vale

It is with great sadness that we inform you of the passing of two of our esteemed and regular members Peter Van Wensveen and Leo Roth. Although quite ill, Peter wanted to contribute to the Group and tell us about the wonderful palliative care he had received, but it was not to be. Several of our members attended Peter's Celebration of Life.

Our thoughts and condolences go out to the families

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### What is a Prostate Cancer Specialist Nurse?

There are lots of nurses throughout Australia working in a variety of jobs helping those affected by prostate cancer. A Prostate Cancer Specialist Nurse is an experienced registered nurse who has received additional training to make them an expert nurse in prostate cancer care. The Prostate Cancer Specialist Nurse works with a clear-cut structure to ensure you receive the same level of care from your nurse, no matter where you live.

The Prostate Cancer Specialist Nurses work with your doctors and others involved in your care. They provide help to men and their families in all areas of prostate cancer care – whether you are newly diagnosed or have already had some treatment.

They are able to help you by:

- Providing you with an ongoing point of contact and support

Assisting you access services both in the hospital and in your community during and after treatment

- Providing you with reliable information about your diagnosis and treatment plan
- Providing you with information on dealing with the effects of treatment and how to get further help to deal with specific problems you may be having
- Coordinating your care – wherever you are in your cancer journey
- Helping you access a support group

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## Future Meetings

Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> March - Anna-Louise Moule - Exercise Physiologist from Balanced Bodies

Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> April - Justin Bott - Financial Information Service Officer with Centrelink,

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## Publicity

One of the main aims of the NB Prostate Cancer Support Group is to reach out to men and their families and provide information and emotional support for those diagnosed with Prostate Cancer. PCFA Ambassador Programme we may be able to reach more men's groups and clubs and spread the word about the importance of regular testing for prostate cancer.

This year, we are hoping that with the support of the PCFA Ambassador Programme we may be able to reach more men's groups and clubs and spread the word about the importance of regular testing for prostate cancer.

If you know of any organisation that may benefit from having one of the Ambassador Speakers visit them please let one of the committee members know.

We are always seeking ways to reach the public and articles about our Group have appeared in Pittwater Online News and the 'What's on Pittwater' website provides information about our meetings.

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## Disclaimer

From time to time in our newsletters we provide information about developments in the diagnosis and treatment of prostate cancer, research articles, documents, presentations and other interesting materials. However, the Group's Executive and the editor of this newsletter do not have the medical expertise required to make an informed evaluation of the conclusions and recommendations presented in such materials, and we have not verified such conclusions and recommendations through appropriately qualified medical professionals. The information presented in this newsletter must not be interpreted as being endorsed or recommended by the Executive or the editor. Any recommendations made in such materials may not be applicable in your particular case. Before implementing any recommendations made in the materials that are reported, it is essential that you obtain advice from appropriately qualified medical professionals. The view of the Group's Executive is that no two prostate cancer cases are alike and that no

single treatment option is better than any other in all cases. While the information in this newsletter should be of interest, there is no substitute for getting informed medical advice from your own GP, specialists and other medical professionals.

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## Contact Us

### Postal address

Northern Beaches Prostate Cancer Support Group  
PO Box 324, Mona Vale, NSW 1660

### Web site

Our web site provides details about the activities of the group, meetings, contact persons and lots of other useful information:

[www.prostate-cancer-support-nb.org](http://www.prostate-cancer-support-nb.org)

### Personal support

If you would like support, advice or assistance contact any of the committee:

Treasurer - Alan Taylor Phone: 02 9981 2616

Library - Ron Jones Phone: 02 9997 2709

Programme Organiser -

Denise Taylor Phone: 02 9981 2616

Catering - Jo-Ann Steeves Phone: 02 9918 6575

Eleanor Swansbra Phone: 02 9918 6428

Norma Norman Phone: 02 9918 4929

Committee member, newsletter editor and web site manager:

Mary Jones Phone: 0409 909 356

Email: [info@prostate-cancer-support-nb.org](mailto:info@prostate-cancer-support-nb.org)

Useful websites:

[www.pcfa.org.au](http://www.pcfa.org.au) Telephone: 02 9438 7000

See PCFA Newsletters online at:

[www.pcfa.org.au/articleLive/pages/PCFA-Newsletters.html](http://www.pcfa.org.au/articleLive/pages/PCFA-Newsletters.html)

Other useful links-

[www.prostatehealth.org.au](http://www.prostatehealth.org.au)

[www.cancercouncil.com.au](http://www.cancercouncil.com.au)

[www.andrologyaustralia.org](http://www.andrologyaustralia.org)

[www.acf.com.au](http://www.acf.com.au)

[www.prostate-cancer-support-act.net](http://www.prostate-cancer-support-act.net)

[www.prostate-cancer-support-sydneynorth.org](http://www.prostate-cancer-support-sydneynorth.org)

If you are aware of news, products, publications, web sites, services or events that may be of interest to members of the group I'd be happy to be informed of them. If you have received this newsletter indirectly and would like to be emailed a copy directly please send me an email. I'm happy to also add any of your friends to the email list.

Past issues of our newsletters can be viewed on our website: [www.prostate-cancer-support-nb.org](http://www.prostate-cancer-support-nb.org)