More doctors say men should think twice about prostate cancer screening

Reuters reports that an international panel of experts has concluded, “Most men shouldn’t get routine prostate cancer screening because the potential benefits are small and there are clear harms.”

The prostate-specific antigen (PSA) blood test is the test used screen for prostate cancer. Experts researched studies with a total of more than 700,000 men and found that if screening reduces prostate cancer deaths at all, it’s negligible. The data indicates that PSA screening risks outweigh the benefits but despite that, the report states that those with a family history of prostate cancer likely still benefit from screening.

> *Although the results of this study suggest screening is not worthwhile, several guidelines advocate offering screening in some cases.” – Prostate cancer screening with PSA test*

Reuters quotes co-author Dr. Philipp Dahm of the University of Minnesota as saying

> *Most, but not all, well-informed men that fully understand the trade-offs would choose not to undergo screening.”*
>
> *Only those men who place more value in even a small reduction of prostate cancer mortality – these may be men at higher risk because of a family history or because of African descent, or those simply very concerned about ruling out a cancer diagnosis – may opt for screening. Shared decision-making is needed to help them arrive at a decision consistent with their own values and preferences.”*

Chances are, everyone has cancer. Most men with prostate cancer have low-risk tumors that haven’t spread outside the prostate. Cancer screening for prostrates has gotten so good that men are being discovered with extremely low-risk cancers and then being aggressively treated for it with risks that far outweigh the cancer itself.

For the last few years, the media has gone back and forth on whether or not regular prostate screening benefits outweigh the risks. Our position is don’t drink, don’t smoke, keep your gut healthy, and stay away from doctors unless it’s an emergency.

Recommended:

- *Myth of Moderate Alcohol Benefits Debunked, and How Science Gets Corrupted*
- *How To Heal Your Gut*