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www.kdheks.gov

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KDHE Recognizes September as Prostate Cancer Awareness Month

Prostate cancer is the second leading cause of cancer death among men in the United States. It is the most common form of cancer in men (other than some forms of skin cancer). According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), in 2005 (the most recent year for which statistics are available), 185,895 men developed prostate cancer and 28,905 men died from the disease. In the same year in Kansas, 1,938 cases were diagnosed and 256 men died from prostate cancer.

Medical experts do not fully understand what causes prostate cancer or how to prevent it. While all men are at risk for prostate cancer, some factors increase risk, including age, family history, and race/ethnicity. Some prostate cancers become a serious threat to health, while others do not and don't affect how long a man lives. The main screening tools for prostate cancer are the digital rectal examination and the prostate-specific antigen test. These tests do not detect prostate cancer and only suggest the need for further tests.

“Evidence is mixed about whether early detection improves health outcomes. Given the uncertainty about the benefit of screening, CDC supports informed decision making about screening,” said Dr. Jason Eberhart-Phillips, State Health Officer and Director of Health for the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE). “When a man understands the nature and risks of prostate cancer and the risks, benefits, and alternatives to screening, he can make a decision consistent with his preferences and values.”

CDC supports increased awareness about prostate cancer and efforts to expand research about screening and treatment options, especially those focused on developing interventions to help men make informed decisions about screening. KDHE joins CDC in promoting increased sharing of screening-related information between providers and their patients in order to advance the overarching goal of helping men live longer, healthier lives.

For Kansas Cancer Information and resources, visit www.cancerkansas.org.

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As the state's environmental protection and public health agency, KDHE promotes responsible choices to protect the health and environment for all Kansans.

Through education, direct services and the assessment of data and trends, coupled with policy development and enforcement, KDHE will improve health and quality of life. We prevent illness, injuries and foster a safe and sustainable environment for the people of Kansas.