Hormone Therapy: The hormone testosterone helps prostate cancer grow. Medications are used to decrease testosterone and help stop the growth of prostate cancer. This therapy may be done in advanced prostate cancer. Hormones may also be given with radiation therapy or surgery. Side effects may include decreased sex drive and hot flashes.

Remember
Prostate cancer generally grows slowly. Talk with your doctor about selecting your treatment and balancing the expected benefits and side effects of your choices.
• Do not hesitate to ask your doctor, nurse or other healthcare provider to repeat any instructions or medical terms you don’t understand. Your medical team at Southwest will always be available to answer your questions and address your concerns.
• Make use of resources and support services offered by Southwest and in the community. Learning more about your disease will help you feel more at ease with your treatment.
• Ask family and friends to help you organize the information you receive to help determine what matters the most to you.
• Talk with other patients and families about prostate cancer and its treatment.

The Southwest Difference
The diagnosis of cancer can be overwhelming. You and your loved ones may be facing many questions, medical treatment options and lifestyle changes.
At Southwest’s Regional Cancer Center, we believe that superb cancer care goes beyond the latest technology and innovative treatments. We are here to help you and your loved ones keep the best quality of your life throughout your journey with cancer.

Cancer Support Group
360.514.2174
www.swmedicalcenter.org/cancersupport

Prostate Support Group
360.514.2174
www.swmedicalcenter.org/cancersupport

SOUTHWEST Regional Cancer Center
Cancer care for the whole person
P.O. Box 1600
Vancouver, WA 98668
360.514.2174
www.swmedicalcenter.org/cancercenter
Understanding Prostate Cancer

The prostate is a walnut-size gland in men, located below the bladder and in front of the rectum that surrounds part of the urethra (the tube that carries urine out of the body). It makes fluid that becomes part of the semen. When cells in it change and start to grow uncontrollably, cancer develops.

Risk Factors

Prostate cancer is the most common cancer in men, excluding skin cancer, and the second leading cause of death from cancer in men in the United States. The risk of prostate cancer in men increases with age. African-American males are at a higher risk. Other risk factors include a family history and a high fat diet.

Signs and Symptoms

You may have no symptoms or may experience many of the same symptoms associated with BPH (benign prostatic hyperplasia), which creates an enlarged prostate. The signs are:

• Frequent urination, especially at night
• Slow or hesitant urine stream
• Dribbling after urination

Diagnostic Testing

PSA Blood Test: Prostate Specific Antigen (PSA) is an enzyme normally in men’s blood. An elevated level may indicate prostate cancer.

• PSA can also be elevated in non-cancerous conditions such as BPH and prostatitis, an infection or inflammation of the prostate.
• PSA also tends to rise with age.
• Prostate cancer may be found in men with a normal PSA. Normal PSA levels are 0.0 - 4.0.

Digital Rectal Exam (DRE): The prostate can be easily felt by your doctor through the rectum. Normally the prostate is smooth and symmetrical. Your doctor will check for any firmness or nodules.

Transrectal Ultrasonography: If the DRE or PSA test is abnormal, you will be scheduled to have a special probe inserted into the rectum. High frequency sound waves from the probe will be used to create images that can show abnormalities.

Making a Diagnosis

If your doctor suspects cancer, you may have a biopsy. An ultrasound probe is inserted into the rectum and a special spring-needle gun takes 6 - 12 cores of tissue. You may be given an antibiotic to prevent infection and a local anesthetic. The tissue cores are examined for cancer. You may experience some blood in your urine, semen or rectum afterward.

If cancer is found, it will be assigned a stage (how advanced the cancer is) and a grade (how abnormal the cells look) with ranges from 2 - 10. The higher the score, the greater the risk that cancer may have spread outside the prostate. This information will be used to plan your treatment.

Treatment Options

Surgery: Radical prostatectomy (removal of the gland) and cryosurgery (freezing the prostate) are surgical options. The prostate gland, seminal vesicles, and cuff of the bladder neck are removed. Lymph nodes may also be removed. Side effects may include erectile dysfunction (inability to have an erection), urinary incontinence (lack of bladder control), and other bladder symptoms.

Radiation Therapy: With standard radiation treatments that use high-energy x-rays, side effects may include erectile dysfunction, bladder and bowel symptoms. Our team offers additional options that precisely kill prostate cancer cells while avoiding healthy tissue nearby.

• Intensity Modulated Radiation Therapy (IMRT) uses specially molded beams that adjust to the shape of a tumor, or even target specific points inside a tumor. It’s like “painting” the dose to mimic the tumor’s shape.

• CyberKnife® Robotic Surgery System uses a non-invasive, outpatient procedure to target the tumor from multiple positions. The CyberKnife continually checks and corrects for the patient’s breathing and other movement, ensuring superior accuracy and pain-free treatment. Learn more at www.swmedicalcenter.org/cyberknife or 360.514.CYBR (2927).

The da Vinci Surgical System: A minimally invasive alternative to traditional surgery is the da Vinci Surgical System. Southwest’s specially trained surgeons use robotics-guided technology to perform prostatectomy and other urologic procedures with 1 - 2 cm incisions. Learn more at www.remarkablerobotics.org.