



Media Contact:

Carol Bross-McMahon
JZMcBride and Associates
513-231-5115
Carol@JZMcBride.com

THE UROLOGY GROUP'S POSITION ON PSA TESTS

Issued: May 23, 2012

The Urology Group stands in unison with physicians, prostate cancer patients and patient advocacy groups across the nation who have expressed outrage at a May 21 decision by the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force to recommend against use of the prostate-specific antigen (PSA) test for cancer screening. The federal task force action this week formalizes a preliminary recommendation issued last year. Despite public and professional outcry, and the emergence of new data, which strengthens the value of PSA screening, the panel decided this week not to change its controversial position on the PSA test. This same panel's recommendations against breast self examination and mammography for younger women were strongly rejected by the public in the past.

The Large Urology Group Practice Association (LUGPA), of which The Urology Group is a founding member, immediately discredited the task force recommendation. "We are appalled at the...recommendation that healthy men should no longer receive prostate-specific antigen blood tests as part of routine cancer screening," said Dr. Deepak A. Kapoor, president of LUGPA. "Failing to detect cancer early will create a public health catastrophe in 5-10 years."

Dr. Sushil S. Lacy, president of the American Urological Association, said his group is outraged at the failure of the task force to amend its recommendations on prostate cancer testing to more adequately reflect the benefits of the PSA test. "Men who are in good health and have more than a 10-15 year life expectancy should have the choice to be tested and not discouraged from doing so. There is strong evidence that PSA testing saves lives," Dr. Lacy said.

U.S. Congresswoman Donna Christensen, a physician who chairs the Congressional Black Caucus Health Braintrust, said the task force recommendation will set back efforts to battle prostate cancer. She said the task force took a one-size-fits-all approach that fails to consider the disproportionate impact of prostate cancer on African-American men, men with a family history of prostate cancer, and veterans exposed to Agent Orange.

"As with others in our industry we are more than disappointed with the task force's recommendation," said Dr. Gary Kirsh, president of The Urology Group in Cincinnati. "We will continue to offer free prostate cancer screenings in underserved areas of Greater Cincinnati as part of our community outreach program because we know early detection saves lives."

Urologists have seen a nearly 40 percent reduction in prostate cancer mortality in the last two decades since the PSA testing became commonplace. The physician members of The Urology Group believe that all men, especially those in high risk categories, should be able to make an informed decision about prostate cancer screening in consultation with their doctors.

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About The Urology Group

The Urology Group is one of the largest single specialty groups of urologists in the United States, with 34 urologists on staff. The Urology Group provides medical and surgical care for all diseases of the urinary tract in men and women and the genital tract for men. Headquartered in Cincinnati, Ohio, and opening a \$20 million advanced care surgery facility in the summer of 2012, the group includes practices extending from Northern Kentucky to Middletown, Ohio, and from Southeastern Indiana to Adams County, Ohio.