

How to improve duration and quality of life in men?

This question plays a central role in prostate cancer research and was the reason for the initiation of the European Randomized Study of Screening for Prostate Cancer (ERSPC) and its spinoff the Prostate Cancer Research International Active Surveillance (PRIAS) study.

It is a great honor for me as a retired urologist and former coordinator of the ERSPC to write a brief introduction to this comprehensive overview of the present status of our knowledge concerning screening and active surveillance of prostate cancer. My cooperation with the lead author of this focused issue, Professor Monique Roobol, PhD, who started her career in urology on September 15, 1991 was an essential element in the development and conduct of the ERSPC and PRIAS trials.

It is very satisfying to be aware that important unresolved questions concerning the early diagnosis and management of prostate cancer can still be addressed by results derived from our trials. This will hopefully result in a level of understanding of the advantages and disadvantages of screening for prostate cancer which will lead to the worldwide reduction of the incidence and mortality of this disease at an acceptable rate of side effects. In many countries prostate cancer is the second or third most frequent cause of death from cancer in males.

The present overview summarizes relevant information which can be considered a milestone in reaching this goal.

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