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IU study: Many testicular cancer survivors have low testosterone levels; likely to experience other chronic health problems

June 2, 2017

INDIANAPOLIS – Indiana University cancer researchers found that many testicular cancer survivors have low testosterone levels and are more likely to have chronic health problems.

In the study, the researchers found that 38 percent of 491 testicular cancer survivors had low testosterone levels, or hypogonadism. Further, compared to survivors with normal testosterone levels, survivors with low testosterone were more likely to report a range of chronic health problems such as high blood pressure, diabetes and erectile dysfunction.

"Because testicular cancer is the most common cancer among young men and is highly curable, many survivors may live more than 40 years after diagnosis," Mohammad Issam Abu Zaid, MBBS, an assistant professor of medicine at IU School of Medicine and lead author, said. "Our findings underscore the need to screen testicular cancer survivors for hypogonadism and treat those who have symptoms."

Dr. Abu Zaid, who completed his hematology-oncology fellowship at the Indiana University Melvin and Bren Simon Cancer Center in 2016, presented the findings at the American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO) annual meeting today in Chicago. The findings were part of the ASCO official press program. Less than 1 percent of all abstracts submitted to ASCO are included in the press program. More than 2,150 abstracts were accepted for presentation at the annual meeting, plus more than 2,890 additional abstracts were accepted for online publication, according to ASCO.

Dr. Abu Zaid and colleagues reported that low testosterone can be present at the time of testicular cancer diagnosis or it can develop as a side effect from surgery or chemotherapy. Although it has been known that low testosterone levels can occur in testicular cancer survivors, this is one of the first studies to examine its relationship with long-term health complications among North American patients, according to the researchers.

Compared to survivors with normal testosterone, testicular cancer survivors with low testosterone were more likely to take medications for:

- High cholesterol
- High blood pressure
- Erectile dysfunction
- Diabetes
- Anxiety or depression

"Testicular cancer survivors are at risk for late complications from their cisplatin-based chemotherapy," Dr. Abu Zaid said. "Recognizing and treating low testosterone in those with symptoms can improve quality of life

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Mohammad Issam Abu Zaid, MBBS, assistant professor of medicine at IU School of Medicine

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and lessen adverse health outcomes such as diabetes and early cardiac problems. We recommend that these men exercise, maintain a healthy body weight, and monitor their blood pressure and cholesterol levels."

The researchers studied 491 patients enrolled in the IU-led Platinum Study. The goal of the study is to follow the lifelong health of men who received cisplatin chemotherapy for testicular cancer.

In 1974, Lawrence Einhorn, MD, IU Distinguished Professor, Livestrong Foundation Professor of Oncology, and professor of medicine, tested cisplatin with two additional drugs that were effective in killing testis cancer cells. The combination became the cure for this once deadly disease.

This study was funded by the National Cancer Institute (R01 CA157823).

Other authors from IU included Dr. Einhorn, Lois Travis, MD, ScD, and Patrick Monahan, PhD.

ASCO is the world's leading professional organization representing physicians who care for people with cancer. The annual meeting attracts more than 30,000 oncology professionals from around the world.

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INDIANA UNIVERSITY

IU SIMON CANCER CENTER
Indiana University Melvin and Bren Simon Cancer Center



IUSCC news

June/July 2017

IU Simon Cancer Center hosts acting director of NCI

The IU Simon Cancer Center hosted Doug Lowy, the acting director of the National Cancer Institute, for a full-day visit on June 28.

In a series of small-group discussions in the morning, he met with cancer center members (members' names appear in bold) and others to learn about:

- Pediatric genomics with **D. Wade Clapp**, MD, and **Jamie Renbarger**, MD, MS
- Breast cancer research program with **Hari Nakshatri**, PhD
- Komen Tissue Bank at IU Simon Cancer Center with **Anna Maria Storniolo**, MD
- Precision health with **Bryan Schneider**, MD, and **Milan Radovich**, PhD
- Big Ten Cancer Research Consortium and the Hoosier Cancer Research Network with **Bert O'Neil**, MD, Cynthia Burkhardt, RN, and Chris Fausel, PharmD
- Kenya and cancer with **Patrick Loehrer**, MD, Bob Einterz, MD, and **Terry Vik**, MD

In the afternoon, Dr. Lowy presented "NCI-supported Research: Concepts, Opportunities, and Applications" to cancer center members and others. [Watch](#).

When asked about what surprised him most about his visit, Dr. Lowy mentioned the statewide health care system and the oncology work in Kenya.

"I was unaware of the extensiveness of the Indiana-wide cancer treatment network and how long it has been going on and how effective it seems to be, both for doing research and for what I assume is improving the quality of care statewide. That really struck me," he said.

As for the cancer center's global reach in Kenya, he said: "The Kenya project seemed to me that it's a remarkable blend of delivering care and continually improving quality of care while at the same time conducting relevant research in the population."

Dr. Lowy visited the Purdue University Center for Cancer Research the following day.

He is visiting the cancer centers to understand the strengths of each cancer center and the unique aspects of their programs in advancing cancer research and the cause, diagnosis, prevention, and treatment of cancer.



Drs. Schneider (left) and Milan Radovich (middle) explain their work on the next generation of personalized medicine with Dr. Doug Lowy, acting director of the National Cancer Institute. Dr. Lowy visited the IU Simon Cancer Center on June 28.

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A Cancer Center Designated by the
National Cancer Institute



IUSCC news

June/July 2017

News briefs

Vera Bradley Classic sets another record for breast cancer research



This year's Vera Bradley Classic set a second consecutive record with \$1,100,065 raised for breast cancer research. Since 1994, the classic has raised more than \$29 million for the Vera Bradley Foundation for Breast Cancer Research Laboratories at the IU Simon Cancer Center. [more >](#)



Breast tissue donors, volunteers, and supporters mark the 10th anniversary of the Komen Tissue Bank at IU Simon Cancer Center during a celebration June 21. The world's only healthy breast tissue bank has tissue samples from more than 5,000 women. [WRTV 6 News interviewed Anna Maria Stornio, MD, the bank's executive director, about the progress the bank has contributed to breast cancer research.](#) #KTBis10 #KTBatIU

IUSM honors Dr. Loehrer

On June 16, IU School of Medicine Dean Jay Hess hosted a reception on campus to celebrate Patrick Loehrer, MD, the inaugural recipient of the American Society of Clinical Oncology's Allen S. Lichter Visionary Leader Award for his extraordinary leadership. [See photo album.](#) As a recipient of the award, Dr. Loehrer presented "[Heroes, Role Models, Mentors and Friends](#)" at the American Society of Clinical Oncology's annual meeting in Chicago on June 5.



Krahulik

Krahulik is new HR business partner

Caren Krahulik has been named the HR business partner at the IU Simon Cancer Center. She will manage daily human resources and academic administrative functions and all payroll functions for the cancer center, including the Clinical Trials Office. She will provide expertise on all aspects of employment, compensation, employee relations, benefits, training, professional development, project management, and educational research. She can be reached at ckrahuli@iu.edu or 278-4717. Her office is in Walther Hall, room 511.

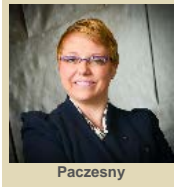
Indianapolis Indians host fundraiser July 13 for SON Foundation

Enjoy a game of baseball and support [SON \(Serving Others' Needs\) Foundation](#) – a foundation that provides lodging for cancer patients and their loved ones. For every \$10 seat purchased for the July 13 Indianapolis Indians game against the Louisville Bats, \$5 will go to the SON Foundation. Order tickets [online](#) and use the password "son."

NCI Almanac: A new tool for research on cancer drug combinations

The NCI has released a new, easy-to-use resource called the NCI ALMANAC to help researchers identify potentially promising combinations of cancer drugs. [full story >](#)

Cancer center members in the news



- Effective July 1, **Sophie Paczesny**, MD, PhD, is the second holder of the Nora Letzter Professorship in Pediatrics. In addition to the new title of Nora Letzter Professor of Pediatrics, Dr. Paczesny will retain her current titles of professor of pediatrics and professor of microbiology and immunology.
- **Bill Wooden**, MD, and an interdisciplinary team of health care professionals at IU Health Methodist and University hospitals, received the Innovation Award at the 2017 Patient Safety Summit presented by the Indiana Patient Safety Center. To enhance preventive health care, the team developed an innovative Preoperative Wellness Program for patients undergoing elective surgery, which includes a "red bag" of immune-boosting supplements to allow patients to better endure surgical procedures, reduce complications and experience faster recovery. A pilot test of the program resulted in reduced lengths of hospital stay, lower infection rates and fewer readmissions. Based on its success, the program is being expanded to all 14 IU Health hospitals across the state.
- **Alexander L. Dent**, PhD, and Markus M. Xie, a doctoral candidate, have been selected for the American Association of Immunologists (AAI) Careers in Immunology Fellowship. The fellowship aims to support the career development of both AAI regular and trainee members by providing the awarded principal investigator with one year of salary support for a predoctoral student or postdoctoral fellow in his/her lab. As a recipient of this award, Xie will receive salary support from AAI to conduct research on follicular help T cells under the direction of Dr. Dent. The research aims to provide cellular and molecular insights to the development of novel immunotherapeutics.
- **Naga Chalasani**, MD, has been elected to the Association of American Physicians for 2017. Also, Dr. Chalasani has been named [associate dean for clinical research](#) at IU School of Medicine.
- **Paul Macklin**, PhD, discussed how applied mathematics and tumor biology are coming together to drive new research in a recent Breast Cancer Research Foundation podcast. [Listen](#).
- **Lawrence Einhorn**, MD, and **Shadia Jalal**, MD, wrote "[Carboplatin and Etoposide With or Without Palifosfamide in Untreated Extensive-Stage Small-Cell Lung Cancer: A Multicenter, Adaptive, Randomized Phase III Study \(MATISSE\)](#)," which was published in the Journal of Clinical Oncology.
- **Yunlong Liu**, PhD, has been named [interim director of IU School of Medicine's Center for Computational Biology and Bioinformatics](#) (CCBB).

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