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## 'Nigeria needs better specialists'

SEPTEMBER 15, 2013 BY MOTUNRAYO JOEL

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**Nagaraj**

In this interview with MOTUNRAYO JOEL, a professor and Head, Department of Urology, M.S.Ramaiah Memorial Hospital, Bangalore, H.K. Nagaraj, speaks on the rising cases of prostate cancer and the advantages of early detection of the disease

### Has there been an increase in the rate of prostate cancer in the past 10-20 years?

Yes, there is an increase in the detection of prostate cancer recently. This is due to screening using the PSA (Prostate Specific Antigen) blood test. There are no specific causes of cancer of the prostate. It is more common in Africa. It is commonly seen in the age groups of above 50 years.

### What is the survival rate for prostate cancer patients?

Survival rate of prostate cancer is usually good compared to other types of cancer. The survival rates are better if detected early. Now, we have various modalities for early detection and treatment. Laparoscopic or Robotic Radical Prostatectomy gives excellent long term survival benefits in early prostate cancers. If the cancer is advanced, we can use hormonal manipulations, targeted therapies and radiotherapy. The majority of the patients die within three years if detected late.

### Are there ways a cancer patient can increase his chances of survival?

Yes, by early detection and surgical correction. It is ideal to check the PSA once a year in patients above 50 years of age. M.S. Ramaiah Memorial Hospital, has the facility to take care of prostate cancer patients and laparoscopic radical prostatectomy is regularly performed at our centre.

### What are the ways prostate cancer can be prevented?

Till now, there are no preventive measures for prostate cancer.

### Can prostate cancer survivors enjoy a healthy and active sex life during or after their recovery?

Yes, they can have active sex lives. There may be transient erectile dysfunction for a period of one year after surgery for prostate cancers.

### What are some other common urological problems for both men and women?

The common urological problems are urinary tract infection, kidney and ureteric stones, tumours in the kidneys or urinary bladder, urethral stricture disease, erectly dysfunction, benign enlargement of the prostate, kidney failure etc.

### As an urologist, what are your top tips for getting and staying healthy?

Daily exercises, less meat, more fluids, master health checkup once a year and less alcohol.

### What is your impression about Nigeria's health care system?

It is very good. But it needs more super specialists.

### How do you plan to contribute to boosting Nigeria's health care?

Super specialists can visit the country more frequently, identify the health problems and treat patients at an affordable cost. We can also train Nigerian doctors.

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