

ACTIVE SURVEILLANCE

The increased public awareness of prostate cancer has led to an increase in the diagnosis of very early low risk cancers that may not pose a risk to patients.

Active surveillance is a term applied to a management protocol for prostate cancer that your doctor may consider poses little or no risk in the future. The suitability for an individual patient to embark on an active surveillance protocol depends on number of factors including the age and general fitness of the patient, the pathological features of the cancer as determined by the pathologist on the biopsy, and the PSA. The individual patient's willingness to accept this conservative approach is also important.

At the time of diagnosis your doctor will undertake a number of tests including an MRI and other imaging tests to assess your suitability for this type of management.

Active Surveillance Protocol

- ❖ Scheduled visits with your urologist to check your prostate and your PSA. This is usually carried out for every 3 months in the first year and thereafter the interval can then be increased to 6 monthly if you are stable.
- ❖ A repeat biopsy is carried out 12 months and thereafter at intervals of 3 to 5 years depending on individual patient circumstances. The 12 month biopsy is very important as it is used to identify if there is any evidence of more aggressive cancer.

Results

Long term studies have shown that patients who have truly "low risk prostate cancer" and show no evidence of progression can be safely managed this way avoiding the risks and complications associated with active treatment.

Thirty per cent of patients who embark on active surveillance will

eventually proceed to active treatment. This is usually due to disease progression or reclassification of the cancer into a more aggressive form but may also be because the patient elects to have active treatment.

It is important that before an individual patient considers this option that he has discussed his condition with his urologist and that the features of his prostate cancer are suitable for this conservative approach. It is also important that the patient be prepared to comply with follow up arrangements.

For further information contact Dr Enzo Lazzaro Ph 029982 4477

Disclaimer. This information is of a general nature, it is not intended as a substitute for you own independent advice from your doctor