

August 14, 1992

Editor's note: Sept. 27-Oct. 9, 1992 is Prostate Cancer Awareness Week.

### RESEARCH, PATIENT CARE JOIN FORCES IN NEW PROSTATE DISEASE CENTER

DALLAS--In the first program of its kind in the Southwest and one of few nationwide, researchers and clinicians at The University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas are working together to bring advances in prostate disease research more rapidly to the patient's bedside.

"UT Southwestern is the only place in this part of the country combining state-of-the-art research and treatment for both benign and malignant diseases of the prostate," said Dr. John D. McConnell, associate professor of urology and director of the new Prostate Disease Center.

Diseases of the prostate, including benign prostatic hyperplasia (BPH) and prostatic cancer, are nearly universal in the aging male population. Yet men with these diseases have tended to be underserved by the health-care system. The Prostate Disease Center at UT Southwestern draws together some of the country's foremost specialists in the Divisions of Urology and Endocrinology, the Departments of Molecular Genetics and Pathology, and the Harold C. Simmons Comprehensive Cancer Center. Shared facilities encourage daily interaction between caregivers and basic scientists.

UT Southwestern has long been at the forefront of research for prostate disease.

Recent breakthroughs include cloning the genes for the androgen

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receptor and for 5-alpha-reductase, an enzyme crucial to normal prostatic development. These advances have provided new tools for the study of both benign and malignant prostatic growth.

Other basic research at UT Southwestern has led to clinical trials for drugs specifically designed to counter BPH. This includes the much-heralded 5 alpha-reductase inhibitor, finasteride, for which UT Southwestern served as one of the principal investigational sites. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration approved finasteride (Proscar®) on June 19.

The Prostate Disease Center currently is involved in multi-site clinical trials for a newer BPH drug, zanerone. An ongoing project is a long-term study that compares the effectiveness of muscle-relaxing drugs called alpha blockers to balloon dilation, surgery and "watchful waiting" in the management of BPH. With the Dallas Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center, the prostate center also is helping test a video on BPH treatment options, produced by the Foundation for Informed Medical Decision Making of Hanover, N.H.

Recently the Prostate Disease Center faculty has started using new, state-of-the-art laser technology to relieve urinary tract obstruction from prostate enlargement.

Outpatient services are provided chiefly through the Aston Ambulatory Care Center, located on the UT Southwestern campus. Patients requiring surgery are admitted to Zale Lipshy University Hospital at Southwestern Medical Center.

Radiation therapy for prostate cancer is available through the Harold C. Simmons Comprehensive Cancer Center facilities at St. Paul Medical Center and

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Parkland Memorial Hospital. Veterans have access to many of these same services through the V.A. Medical Center.

Since 1989, McConnell has served as chairman of a 14-member panel appointed by the U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services' Agency for Health Care Policy and Research (AHCPR) to develop BPH treatment guidelines. The panel is expected to publish its findings this fall. McConnell and Dr. Claus G. Roehrborn, assistant professor of urology and a consultant to the AHCPR panel, also have played pivotal roles in the development of BPH treatment guidelines for the World Health Organization.

UT Southwestern's Prostate Disease Center, headed by McConnell, has four associate directors:

- Dr. Paul C. Peters holds the E.E. and Greer Garson Fogelson Distinguished Chair in Urology and the Dr. Paul Peters Chair in Urology in Memory of Rumsey and Louis Strickland. He performed Texas' first successful kidney transplant in 1964, and is a past president of the American Urological Association.
- Dr. Jean D. Wilson, holder of the Charles C. Sprague Distinguished Chair in Biomedical Science and a member of the National Academy of Sciences, is one of the world's leading authorities on the hormones that regulate prostatic growth and development.
- Dr. John D. Minna, holder of the Lisa K. Simmons Distinguished Chair in Comprehensive Oncology and director of the Harold C. Simmons Comprehensive Cancer Center, is an expert on the genetics of cancer.

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■ Dr. David A. Pistenmaa, one of the country's leading experts in radiation therapy for prostate cancer, will direct the radiation therapy aspects of the program.

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NOTE: The University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas comprises Southwestern Medical School, Southwestern Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences, Southwestern Allied Health Sciences School, affiliated teaching hospitals and outpatient clinics.