

US Medicine's Message to Black Men:

We Won't Spend a Dime to Find Your Cancer!

8/5/19

Black men in the US have the *highest rate of prostate cancer in the world*, twice the rate of White men. It is a leading cause of death for all men and Black men die from this cancer at over *twice* the rate of White men. The cancer in Blacks often spreads more quickly if not aggressively treated. <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jama/issue/320/23>. Over the last forty years, at least 30,000 Black men have died yearly from prostate cancer. Screening with the Prostate Specific Antigen (PSA) blood test can find this cancer early.

The 2018 US Preventative Services Task Force (USPSTF) report stated: "Screening offers a small potential benefit of *reducing the chance of death* from prostate cancer in some men." "More aggressive screening strategies particularly those that use a lower PSA threshold, provide the greatest *potential reduction in death* from prostate cancer."

<https://www.uspreventiveservicestaskforce.org/Page/Document/RecommendationStatementFinal/prostate-cancer-screening1>

While acknowledge that PSA screening saves lives the USPSTF does NOT call for universal screening of Black men for prostate cancer. The National Cancer Institute, 4/10/19, The American Cancer Society 3/11/16, and the American College of Physicians, 4/9/13, none of these organizations call for universal prostate cancer screening for Black men.

Why? They screen women for breast cancer, why not men for prostate cancer? Screening mammography for breast cancer has been

universal for decades despite knowing that the test misses many cancers. More than 40,000 women still die yearly from breast cancer.

Black men do NOT get universal prostate screening because of priorities and money.

The PSA test is “a hugely expensive public health disaster”. “As Congress searches for ways to *cut costs* in our health care system, a significant savings could come from changing the way the antigen is used to screen for prostate cancer.”

<https://www.nytimes.com/2010/03/10/opinion/10Ablin.html>

“...universal counseling which may impose significant opportunity *costs* by diverting time from higher priority preventative services.”

<http://www.afp->

[digital.org/afp/july_15_2019/MobilePagedArticle.action?articleId=1505887#articleId1505887](http://www.afp-digital.org/afp/july_15_2019/MobilePagedArticle.action?articleId=1505887#articleId1505887)

“Controlling health care *costs* is the only way to ensure appropriate investment in other areas...” <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jama/issue/321/8>

Black men are not a priority. The political priorities are obvious- Trillions of dollars in tax cuts for corporations and the rich, and trillions in dollars to the military –war machine.

Clearly Black lives don't matter, but it seems that White lives don't matter much either.

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