

Early-onset baldness in African-American men may be linked to prostate cancer

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Baldness was associated with an increased risk of prostate cancer among African-American men, and risk for advanced prostate cancer increased with younger age and type of baldness, according to data published in *Cancer Epidemiology, Biomarkers & Prevention*, a journal of the American Association for Cancer Research.

"We focused on African-American men because they are at high risk for developing [prostate cancer](#) and are more than twice as likely to die from prostate cancer than other groups in the United States," said Charnita Zeigler-Johnson, Ph.D., research assistant professor at the Center for Clinical Epidemiology and Biostatistics at the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia. "Although this is a high-risk group for poor prostate cancer outcomes, no published study had focused on evaluating [baldness](#) as a potential risk factor in a sample of African-American men."

Zeigler-Johnson and her colleagues identified 318 men with prostate cancer and 219 controls among participants who enrolled in the Study of Clinical Outcomes, Risk and Ethnicity (SCORE) between 1998 and 2010. All of them were African-American and had varying degrees of baldness. They obtained information on type of baldness (none, frontal and vertex) and other medical history using a questionnaire.

The researchers found that any baldness was associated with a 69 percent increased risk of prostate cancer. In particular, African-American men with frontal baldness, and not vertex baldness, were more than twice as likely to have been diagnosed with advanced prostate cancer. This

association was even stronger among men who were diagnosed when younger than 60, with a sixfold increase in high-stage prostate cancer and a fourfold increase in high-grade prostate cancer.

In addition, among younger men with prostate cancer, those with frontal baldness were more likely to have a high prostate-specific antigen level at diagnosis.

"Early-onset baldness may be a risk factor for early-onset prostate cancer in African-American men, particularly younger men," said Zeigler-Johnson. "Pending future studies to confirm our results, there is a potential to use early-onset baldness as a clinical indicator of increased [risk](#) for prostate cancer in some populations of [men](#)."

Provided by American Association for Cancer Research

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