

Some prostate cancer patients more likely to die after weekend ER visits

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Patients with prostate cancer that has metastasized, or spread, to other parts of the body face a significantly higher risk of dying when visiting a hospital emergency department on the weekend instead of on a weekday, according to researchers at Henry Ford Hospital in Detroit.

The new study focused on metastatic prostate cancer in examining the so-called "weekend effect" of higher patient mortality, subject of numerous studies for about a decade.

Results from the study will be presented May 5 at the annual meeting of the American Urological Association in San Diego.

Khurshid R. Ghani, M.D., of Henry Ford's Vattikuti Urology Institute and lead author of the study, said he and his colleagues can only speculate on the reasons why this phenomenon appears to affect metastatic prostate cancer patients.

"Our data clearly show they have higher [mortality rates](#) after weekend visits to emergency departments," Dr. Ghani says. "But as to why, there is only a suggestion that they're more likely being treated at hospitals outside of [metropolitan areas](#), places that may have limited access to advanced care."

The researchers identified their study group – metastatic prostate cancer patients who visited emergency rooms from the beginning of 2006 through the end of 2009 – in the Nationwide [Emergency Department](#)

Sample, the largest such database in the U.S., approximating about 20 percent of hospital-based emergency departments across the country.

Of the 15,365 men in this group, 3,943 made weekend visits to emergency departments and 11,422 went on weekdays. A total of 9.3 percent in the weekend group died after their visit, compared to 7.7 percent after a weekday visit.

The data also showed that patients seen on the weekend were:

- Older, with a mean age of 75.1 versus 74.1.
- Healthier, having fewer additional diseases or disorders.
- More likely to visit a non-metropolitan hospital, 19.5 percent versus 14.1 percent.
- Less likely to be suffering [acute renal failure](#), 14.7 percent versus 16.6 percent.
- More likely to have blood in their urine, 18.8 percent versus 17.2 percent.

"After adjusting for age and the presence of disease or disorders other than metastatic [prostate cancer](#), weekend visits were associated with a 23 percent increased likelihood of death," Dr. Ghani says.

Provided by Henry Ford Health System

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