The authors conclude that screening for hormonal problems should be a routine part of the management of testicular cancer survivors.

Rachel Murphy

Original article Huddart RA *et al.* (2005) Fertility, gonadal and sexual function in survivors of testicular cancer. *Br J Cancer* **93:** 200–207

Hypertension is more prevalent in men with erectile dysfunction

A naturalistic cohort study has shown that men with erectile dysfunction (ED) are more likely to have hypertension than men without ED. Many researchers have asserted that ED coexists with other diseases such as hypertension, but few previous studies have directly compared men with and without ED for hypertension at a large population level.

The study included 285,436 men with ED, and 1,584,230 men without ED from a managed-care claims database in the US. Participants were assigned as having ED, hypertension, or other concurrent diseases by the existence of one or more claims to the disease, with a disease–related diagnosis code. The authors note that there are limitations with using data from commercial health plans.

Results of the study showed that 41.2% of men with ED had hypertension, compared with 19.2% of men without ED. When controlling for age, census region and 9 concurrent diseases, the likelihood of men with ED having hypertension was 38.3% higher than the likelihood for men without ED. The authors hypothesize that ED shares common risk factors with hypertension, including hemodynamic abnormality. The study also shows that hypertension treatments are not a major risk factor for ED, because 38% of patients made ED claims before they made hypertension claims.

The investigators recommend that patients and clinicians should use observable ED as an alert to unobservable hypertension.

Rachel Murphy

Original article Sun P and Swindle R (2005) Are men with erectile dysfunction more likely to have hypertension than men without erectile dysfunction? A naturalistic national cohort study. *J Urol* **174**: 244–248

Gene hunters home in on prostate cancer susceptibility genes

In the largest ever combined genome-wide screen for prostate cancer susceptibility genes, researchers have identified regions of the genome likely to harbor genes responsible for hereditary prostate cancer.

It has long been suspected that prostate cancer susceptibility genes exist, but efforts to map them have been hampered by the probable existence of multiple incompletely PENETRANT genes, each responsible for a small proportion of affected families. Furthermore, prostate cancer is common enough for environmentally produced cases to be mistaken for hereditary cases and included in linkage analysis studies.

In an attempt to circumvent these problems, a consortium of 10 groups from Europe and America carried out linkage analysis in 1,233 affected families. This first part of the study identified five promising chromosomal regions, although no significant evidence of linkage was seen, demonstrating the extent of genetic heterogeneity in the study population.

A second approach, where only families with five or more affected individuals or early ages at diagnosis were studied, was more effective. By focusing on families more likely to carry highly penetrant mutations, the researchers were able to identify a region of chromosome 22 with significant linkage to prostate cancer, as well as four other regions with evidence suggestive of linkage.

The authors note that the reproducibility of this finding is unusual in prostate cancer linkage studies, and conclude that their work will help other prostate cancer gene hunters to focus on the most promising regions of the genome.

Tamsin Osborne

Original article Xu J *et al.* (2005) A combined genomewide linkage scan of 1,233 families for prostate cancer-susceptibility genes conducted by the international consortium for prostate cancer genetics. *Am J Hum Genet* **77:** 219–229

GLOSSARY

PENETRANT
Phenotypically manifest