

Prostate Cancer

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Prostate cancer is the number one cancer by incidence in males of increasing age & second by mortality throughout the world. Many known etiological factors are associated with increased risk of prostatic carcinoma including male hormone & its active metabolites, genetic predisposition (BRCA2, inherited polymorphism of some transcription factors), racial difference, environmental factors, food habits etc. Recently an association of importance has been given to molecular level changes; inflammatory cytokines, trace elements like zinc with prostate cancer. Diagnostic modalities & treatment facilities are important for better management & giving improved quality of life to the patients. The present review article highlights some of these findings on prostate cancer namely genetic factors, Highfatty diet, Hormone, medication, sexual activity, inflammatory cytokines, trace element zinc, PSA. These will lead to in hand better understanding of the pathophysiology of prostate cancer.

Key Words: Prostate cancer, risk factors, molecular level changes, trace elements-zinc, diagnosis, treatment modalitie

Introduction

Adenocarcinoma of prostate is the most common form of cancer in men 25% by incidence and second by 10% morality throughout the World. There is one in six lifetime probability of being diagnosed with prostate cancer in men. Prostate cancer a disease of men over 50 years. In autopsy the incidence of prostate cancer is very high 20% in 50s to 70% between 70-80 years. Prostate cancer is uncommon in Asian and occurs most frequently in blacks. Androgen play on important role in prostate cancer. Growth and survival of prostate cancer cells depends on androgen which is bound to the androgen receptor (AR) and induce the expression of progrowth and prosurvival genes. The active metabolite of testosterone (Dihydroxy Testosterone) DHT constitutes about 90% of prostatic androgens¹.

Risk Factors

Understanding of the different causes of prostate cancer remains research interest. Accumulative evidence from the already done research work

suggests the primary risk factors are obesity, age and family history. Prostate cancer is very uncommon in men younger than 45, but becomes more common with advancing age. The average age at the time of diagnosis is 70 years¹. However, many men never know they have prostate cancer. Autopsy studies of Chinese's, German, Israeli, Jamaican, Swedish, and Ugandan men who died of other causes have found prostate cancer in 30% of men in their 50s, and in 80% of men in their 70s². Men whom have first degree family members with prostate cancer appear to have doubled the risk of getting and disease compared to men without prostate cancer in the family³. This risk appears to be grater for men with an affected brother than for men with an affected father. Men with high blood pressure are more likely to develop prostate cancer. There is a small increased risk of prostate cancer associated with lack of exercise⁴. A 2010 study found that prostate basal cells were the most common site of origin for prostate cancers⁶.

Genetic Factors

Genetic background is an important associated risk factor and may contribute to prostate cancer risk, as suggested by associations with race, family, and specific gene variant. Men who have a first-degree relative (father or brother) have a fivefold greater risk of developing prostate cancer compared with men with no family history⁵. In the United States, prostate cancer more commonly affects black men than white or Hispanic men, and is also more deadly in black men^{6,7}. In contrast, the incidence and mortality rates for Hispanic men are one third lower than for non-Hispanic whites. Studies of twins in Scandinavia suggest that 40% of prostate cancer risk can be explained by inherited factors⁸.

No single gene is responsible for prostate cancer; many different genes have been implicated. Mutations in BRCA1 and BRCA2¹¹, important risk factors for ovarian cancer and breast cancer in women, have also been implicated in prostate cancer. Other linked genes include the Hereditary Prostate cancer gene 1 (HPC1), the androgen receptor, and the vitamin D receptor. TMPRSS2-ETS gene family fusion, specifically TMPRSS2-ERG or TMPRSS2-ETV1/4 promotes cancer cell growth.

Two large genome-wide association studies linking single nucleotide polymorphisms (SNPs) to prostate cancer were published in 2008. These studies identified several SNPs which substantially affect the risk of prostate cancer [9]. For example, individuals with TT allele pair at SNP rs10993994 were reported to be at 1.6 times higher risk of prostate cancer than those with the CC allele pair. This SNP explains part of the increased prostate cancer risk of African American men as compared to American men of European descent, since the C allele is much more prevalent in the latter, this SNP is located in the promoter region of the MSMB gene, thus affects the amount of MSMB protein synthesized and secreted by epithelial cells of the prostate.^{10,11}

Loss of cancer suppressor genes localized to chromosome 8p,10q,13q, 16q are seen in early prostatic carcinogenesis. p53 mutation in primary prostate cancer is low and more frequently seen in metastatic carcinoma hence p53 mutation is a late event in prostate cancer. Loss of PTEN gene and KAI gene are also important in prostatic cancer. About 70% of men with prostate cancer lost

PTEN gene at the time of diagnosis. Loss of E-cadherin and CD44 have also been observed¹⁵. RUNX2 is a transcription factor that prevents cancer cells undergoing apoptosis and also contribute to development of Prostate carcinoma. PSMA is associated with increase supply of folate for the cancer cells to survive and grow by hydrolyzing glutamated folate.¹²

ERK5 is a protein that is present in abnormally high levels of prostate cancer including invasive cancer which has spread to other parts of the body.¹⁷

Dietary Factors

While some dietary factors have been associated with prostate cancer the evidence is still tentative. Evidence supports little role for dietary fruits and vegetables in prostate cancer occurrence¹⁴. Red meat and processed meat also appear to have little effect in human studies. Higher meat consumption has been associated with a higher risk in some studies. Lower blood levels of vitamin D may increase the risk of developing prostate cancer¹⁵. Folic acid supplements have no effect on the risk of developing prostate cancer¹⁶. The role of High fatty Diet (HFD) is discussed in later part under separate heading.

Medication Exposure

There are also some links between prostate cancer and medications, medical procedures, and medical conditions. Use of the cholesterol-lowering drugs known as the statins may also decrease prostate cancer risk^{17,18}.

Sexual factors: Many case control study have shown that many lifetime sexual partners and starting sexual activity in early life substantially increases the risk of prostate cancer. There is weak tentative result which suggests that frequent ejaculation may decrease the risk of prostate cancer. A study of eight years and a study in Australia showed that most frequent ejaculation over 21 times per month were less likely to get prostate cancer^{19,20,21,22}.

Inflammation & Cytokines

Benign prostatic hyperplasia (BPH) and prostate cancer (PCa) are the most common urological diseases in elderly men. Although studies suggest the cytokine family might be associated with BPH and PCa, there has been no systemic comparisons of expression of IL-17A, E.F and their receptors,

Genetic Factors

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infiltration of inflammatory cells and changes in structural cells in PCa and BPH. Immunoreactivity for IL-17A, E.F and their receptors IL-17RA, IL-17BR, and IL-17CR, infiltration of inflammatory cells, and changes in structural cells including endothelial cells fibroblast and smooth muscle cells in prostate tissue from subjects with PCa or BPH as well as controls. Immunostaining showed that expression of immunoreactivity for IL-17A, IL-17RA, IL-17E and IL-17F was significantly elevated in prostatic tissue from BPH and PCa compared with that in controls, which was accompanied by increased numbers of infiltrating inflammatory cells and CD31(+) blood vessels. Compared with BPH. PCa was characterized by reduced immunoreactivity for IL-17BR and reduced numbers of CD68(+) macrophages, Fibroblast and smooth muscle cells, although there was a trend for these changes to co-relate with diseases severity in both PCa and BPH. Their data are compatible with hypothesis that IL-17A acting through IL-17A, but not IL-17CR contribute to the pathogenesis of BPH and PCa. In contrast IL-17E interacting with the IL-17BR might have an anti tumor effect²³.

Infection or inflammation of the prostate (prostatitis) may increase the chance for prostate cancer while another study shows infection may help prevent prostate cancer by increasing blood to the area. In particular, infection with the sexually transmitted infections Chlamydia, gonorrhea, or syphilis seems to increase risk. Finally, obesity and elevated blood levels of testosterone may increase the risk for prostate cancer. There is an association between vasectomy and prostate cancer; however, more research is needed to determine if this is a causative relationship^{24,25,26,27}.

Research released in May 2007, found that US war veterans who had been exposed to Agent Orange had a 48% increased risk of prostate cancer recurrence following surgery²⁸.

Precursor Lesion

Prostate containing cancer have a higher frequency and greater extent of PIN, which is allow often seen in proximity to cancer, studies have shown that many of the molecular changes found in invasive cancer are present in PIN such as rearrangement of ETS gene found in a subset of PIN²⁹.

Cancer Antigen

A molecular test that detects the presence of cell-associated PCA3 mRNA in fluid massaged from the prostate by the doctor and first-void urinated out has also been under investigation. PCA3 mRNA is expressed almost exclusively by prostate cells and has been shown to be highly over-expressed in prostate cancer cells. The test result is currently reported as a specimen ratio of PCA3 mRNA to PSA mRNA. Although not a replacement for serum PSA level, the PCA3 test is an additional tool to help decide whether, in men suspected of having prostate cancer (especially if an initial biopsy fails to explain the elevated serum PSA), a biopsy/rebiopsy is really needed. The higher the expression of PCA3 in the sample the greater the likelihood of a positive biopsy; i.e., the presence of cancer cells in the prostate. The PCA3 test for the detection of prostate cancer is highly specific and more precise than all other available screening tests for prostate cancer. The PCA3 test is a molecular biology assay that measures the expression of PCA3 (prostate cancer gene 3) mRNA in urine samples. PCA3 is specific to the prostate and is significantly up-regulated in prostatic cancerous cells. The test quantitatively measures PCA3 mRNA as well as PSA mRNA and determines their ratio. High ratios have been shown to be indicative of prostate cancer.³⁰

Trace Element Zinc

The prostate is a zinc accumulating citrate producing organ. The protein ZIP1 is responsible for active transport of zinc into prostate cells. Zinc plays an important role to change the metabolism of the cell in order to produce citrate which is an important component of semen and apoptosis. The process of zinc accumulation, alteration of metabolism and citrate production is energy inefficient and prostate cells sacrifice enormous energy (ATP) in order to complete this task. Prostate cancer cells are generally devoid of zinc. This allows the prostate cancer cells to save energy and utilize this energy to grow and spread. The absence of zinc is thought occur via a silencing of gene that produces the transporter protein ZIP1. Zinc level in malignant prostate tissue are 62-75% lower than normal tissue. In addition prostate cancer patients have lower zinc levels in blood compared to healthy controls³¹.

Experimental studies have provided evidence that zinc has a protective effect against development and progression of prostate cancer. However, epidemiological studies have reported inconsistent findings. We evaluated the association between pre-diagnostic serum zinc and prostate cancer risk in a cohort of multiethnic population.

This case-control study is nested within the multiethnic Cohort of African Americans, Native Hawaiians, Japanese Americans, Latinos, and whites in Hawaii and California. The analysis included 392 prostate cancer cases and 783 controls matched on age, race/ethnicity, date/time of blood draw and fasting status. Conditional logistic regression was used to estimate odds ratios (OR) and 95% confidence intervals (CI).

The mean serum zinc concentrations did not significantly differ between cases (94.9 $\mu\text{g}/\text{dl}$) and controls (93.9 $\mu\text{g}/\text{dl}$). No association was found between serum zinc levels and prostate cancer either overall or by tumor stage/grade. In ethnic specific analyses, positive associations were found in Japanese Americans (OR for the highest vs. the lowest tertile = 2.59, 95% CI: 1.09-6.17) and Latinos (OR = 2.74, 95% CI: 1.05-7.10), whereas no association was observed in African Americans and whites³².

They found no evidence to support an inverse relationship between serum zinc and prostate cancer risk, and, to the contrary, found a suggestion in the ethnic specific results of a possible increase in risk; however, blood concentrations of zinc may not adequately reflect the levels in prostate tissue. Further study with a larger sample size, and if possible, with assessment of zinc tissue levels, is warranted to confirm these findings.

Another study investigated whether the measurement of serum zinc may improve the detection of prostate cancer (PCa) in men who had total prostate-specific antigen (PSA) levels higher than 4.1 ng/ml. Methods: A mass screening for Pca of 3940 men over 50 years old was undertaken using total serum PSA. Of the 190 men (4.8%) with elevated PSA, 143 (3.6%) underwent a transrectal ultrasonography (TRUS)-guided biopsy of the prostate, and 42 men (1% of total and 29.3% of men undergone biopsy) were found to have cancer. The areas under the receiver operating characteristic curves (ROC-AUC) were used to compare the diagnostic power of cancer detection by means of

serum zinc, and free PSA/total PSA ratio (f/t). Results: The men with levels of serum zinc that ranged from 40 ng/mL-60 ng/mL, had an age adjusted odds ratios (OR) of 5.0. A cutoff value of 100 $\mu\text{g}/\text{mL}$ for serum zinc concentration provided a sensitivity of 90.5% and a specificity of 32.7% in elevated PSA range, and a sensitivity of 93.3% and specificity of 27.1% in gray zone, respectively. In the gray zone ranges of 4.1 ng/mL-10.0 ng/mL, the ROC-AUC for zinc was 73.0% higher than 62.7% of f/t PSA ratio and 56.7% of total PSA. It was concluded that: Pca displays a lower serum zinc concentration. The measurement of zinc levels improves Pca detection in the gray zone compared with the f/t PSA ratio and total PSA³³.

Zinc is a very important trace element and different studies have shown their association with diarrhea, growth retardation and different prostatic lesion including BPH. Serum zinc level was studied in different parts of the world with conflicting results. One study Bangladesh showed gradual progressive increase level of serum zinc in benign, premalignant and malignant lesion of prostate. In BPH the serum zinc level was (mean \pm SD) 101 \pm 26.15, in HGPIN 147 \pm 20.95 and prostate cancer 139 \pm 11.09. This gradual increase in zinc level was statistically significant ($p < 0.017$). In other study in India researchers found strong correlation between plasma zinc level and various prostatic disease. Out of 80 cases studied (20 normal, 50 BPH, 10 cancers). Serum zinc analyzed by atomic absorption photometry the mean zinc level in normal was 94.5 \pm 10.38, BPH, 145.4 \pm 9.67 and 59.6 \pm 3.08 which were highly statistically significant. Another study measured zinc, vitamin A, albumin, copper and retinoid binding protein content in 27 patients with BPH and 19 patients with prostate cancer. A significantly lower zinc level was found in cancer groups ($p < 0.05$)³⁷.

The present study showed that there is gradual progressive increase level of serum zinc found in benign, premalignant and malignant lesion of prostate. In BPH the serum mean \pm SD zinc level was 101 \pm 26.15, in low grade PIN 116 \pm 21.34, high grade PIN 147 \pm 20.95 and in frank prostatic carcinoma it was 139 \pm 11.09 $\mu\text{g}/\text{mL}$. This gradual increase in zinc level found in patients having prostatic lesions is statistically significant ($p < 0.017$)³⁴.

Previously two other studies showed the different

type of results. In one study in India the researchers found strong correlation between plasma zinc levels and various prostatic diseases. Out of 80 cases studied (20 normal, 50 benign, 10 carcinomatous) serum zinc level analyzed by atomic absorption spectrophotometer the mean \pm SD plasma zinc level in the normal case was 94.5 ± 10.38 , for benign prostatic lesion it was 145.4 ± 9.67 , 162.4 ± 2.22 , 172 ± 5.27 (78% rise compared to normal patient) in those with fibromuscular prostate, chronic prostatitis and benign prostatic hyperplasia respectively. Patients with malignancy had a plasma zinc level of 59.6 ± 3.08 , (37% fall compared to normal patients). There was highly statistically significant prostatic disease³⁵.

Another study measured zinc, vitamin A, albumin, copper and retinoid binding protein content in 27 patient with benign prostatic hyperplasia and 19 patients with carcinoma prostate. A significantly lower ($p < 0.05$) level of serum zinc was found in cancer groups as well as a significant zinc/vitamin A correlation ($p < 0.05$).

Prostatic Specific Antigen (PSA)

Prostate specific antigen (PSA) is an important tool to detect prostate cancer, the most common malignancy of the male throughout the world, yet increased PSA alone does not reflect the presence of prostate cancer. Prostate specific antigen (PSA) is a glycoprotein (molecular weight 33-34,000 Dalton containing 7% carbohydrate by weight) which is kallikrein like serine protease secreted by secretory cells located in the luminal side of the prostatic gland. PSA is immunologically specific for prostatic tissue; it is present in normal, benign, hyperplastic and malignant prostate tissue, in metastatic prostatic carcinoma and also in prostatic fluid and seminal plasma. PSA is not found in any other normal tissue obtained from men or other cancers and also not found in apparently healthy woman or women with cancer. Besides it is functionally and immunologically distinctive from prostatic acid Phosphates (PA). PSA test is one of the best ways to screen for prostatic cancer. Many studies in the developed countries consider the normal PSA reference value 0-4ng/ml and > 20 ng/ml is considered highly elevated. However any abnormal PSA value does not necessarily mean cancer. Other pathological prostatic conditions such as prostatitis and benign prostatic hyperplasia (BPH) may also

increase the level of PSA. In such abnormal cases, repeat and serial PSA dilution is advised and a digital per rectal examination, per rectal ultrasonography or MRI is advised. Recommended age specific upper reference range of serum PSA accepted internationally are:

Age range	PSA level
40-49 years	2.5 ng/ml
50-59 years	3.5 ng/ml
60-69 years	4.5 ng/ml
70-79 years	6.5 ng/ml

PSA is organ specific but not cancer specific. Serum PSA level is less perfect for detection of early prostate cancer but there is little doubt that serial measurements of PSA are of great value in assessing response to therapy. Any rise after surgery indicates recurrence, disseminated disease or residual cancer. The preoperative PSA value is a significant independent clinical factor for relapse after radical prostatectomy and also predictive for larger, more aggressive and more locally advanced tumors. In one study out of 190 men with elevated PSA 143(3.6%) underwent trans rectal ultra sonography guided biopsy of the prostate and 42 men (1% of total 29.3% of men undergoing biopsy) were found to have cancer³⁶.

The rate of rise of PSA in a man having cancer and man without cancer is 0.75ng/l per year. For valid test it requires that there be at least PSA measurement per year over a period of 1.5-2 years. This is because there is substantial short term variability (20%) between PSA measurements. PSA exists in two forms free PSA (minor fraction) and total PSA (major fraction bound to antichymotrypsin and minor fraction bound to alpha 2macroglobulin. Any remaining PSA is in the free form. The percentage of free PSA (free PSA/total PSA X100) is lower in men with prostate cancer and higher in benign prostatic lesion. It is more so when the total PSA level is in grey zone i.e. 4-10ng/ml. When free PSA% is above 25%, it indicates low risk or cancer free PSA% lower than 10% are worrisome for cancer. In one study in USA, PSA value over 1ng/ml showed sensitivity of 93.8% and slightly better performances in men younger than 70 years³⁷. Another study in Brazil showed better chances for curing low grade prostate cancer occur in individuals with normal changes for curing low grade prostate cancer occur in individuals with

normal PSA for whom a biopsy is not usually recommended³⁸.

Mild elevation of PSA in serum is seen in nodular hyperplasia, prostatic, Prostatic infarct, major trauma to the prostate such as needle biopsy, TURP.

But the elevation is transient and resolve with proper treatment. PSA level also rises after recent sexual activity or a cystoscopy. Larger doses of some medications used to treat cancer such as cytophosphamide, diethylstilbestrol, methotrexate can interfere with test results.

Prostate specific antigen (PSA) is an important tool for the diagnosis, Prognosis and follows up of prostatic cancer, the most common malignancy of the male throughout the world. It is safe, reliable, specific, noninvasive test if done properly. However there are many benign, inflammatory and other prostatic conditions which can also give rise to elevated PSA value and thus limits its use. Different methods of estimation may also give rise to variable PSA level. Moreover the normal reference range may be variable depending on the age, geographic situation, environmental conditions and other factors³⁹.

High Fatty Diet (HFD)

The current trend towards an increasingly sedentary lifestyle and increasing consumption of high-caloric 'Western style' high-fat diet (HFD) has contributed to the sharply increasing prevalence of metabolic disorders such as obesity and type 2 diabetes in the United States⁴⁰. Presently, obesity is a major health concern, and according to the Center for Disease Control & Prevention, approximately 40% of the adults in the United States are obese and 20% of children and adolescents are overweight. A closer examination of obesity has revealed that a preferential accumulation of fat in the abdominal region of men is associated with increased risk of urologic complications including urinary incontinence, erectile dysfunction, benign prostatic hyperplasia (BPH) and perhaps cancer⁴¹.

A strong association between fatty acids and prostate diseases has been reported with several intriguing hypotheses. These include mechanisms involving inflammation, oxidative stress, peroxidation of lipids and accumulation of 8-hydroxy-2'-deoxyguanosine and increased androgen synthesis driving the growth of the prostate. High-fat diet induces a low-grade chronic

inflammatory response, a phenomenon designated as 'metabolically triggered inflammation or meta-inflammation'. The direct effects of HFD on the prostate are still unclear, though it is considered to cause inflammation and oxidative stress through alteration in various signaling pathways that increase the vulnerability of the prostate to numerous diseases⁴². In this review we focused on the role of HFD in the genesis of oxidative stress and intra prostatic inflammation and their influences on signaling pathways that orchestrate various prostate diseases, including cancer⁴³.

Accumulative evidence suggests that HFD influences prostatic inflammation and plays a significant role in the development of prostatitis, BPH and prostate cancer. HFD induced chronic inflammation plays a key role in the induction of prostate growth & BPH progression while potentiating of oxidative stress may give rise to PIA lesion making the prostate vulnerable to cancer initiation. They suggested that HFD induced association between NF- κ B & STAT 3 are possibly signaling mechanisms that drive inflammation in the prostate. They speculated that HFD may also orchestrate other pathways that may trigger inflammation of the prostate leading to BPH or cancer. Dietary fat has been reported to affect the secretion and metabolism of androgen⁴⁴.

Diagnostic Modalities of Prostate Cancer

It is evident that early diagnosis of prostate cancer is a must for better prognosis, improvement of quality of life, cancer free interval and prevention of metastasis. Apart from clinical, familial and genetic screening the gold standard trio of accurate diagnosis is Digital Rectal Examination (DRE)⁴⁵, Ultrasonography of prostate (USG) and Biopsy. These three can accurately diagnose about 95% of the prostatic cancer. Along with these Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) with Ultrasonography (USG) is an effective tool for tumour extension, targeted therapy and prognosis. Among prostatic biopsy Trans Urethral Resection of Prostate (TURP) is commonly performed, however needle core biopsy, open biopsy is also done in selected cases^{46,47,48}. Tumour marker PSA estimation, ratio of free and total PSA, Prostatic Acid Phosphatase (PAP) estimation. Among these PSA is a single widely used marker for diagnosis, prognosis of prostate cancer. Other markers like PSMA, p53, BCL2, ERK5, ki67 are important in metastatic disease, recurrence and bears a bad

prognosis. ER and PR is important markers for prognosis and positive cases are good candidate for antihormone therapy⁴⁹.

Management of Prostate Cancer

The effective treatment of prostate cancer depends on the patient, its sign & symptoms, stage of the disease and presence or absence of metastasis. Many early diagnosed lowgrade cancer occurring in elderly men, grows slowly can be safely followed with active surveillance or watchful waiting⁵⁰. These include monitoring the tumor for signs of growth or appearance of symptoms. The monitoring processes involve serial PSA, physical examination of prostate, repeated biopsies. The best option of treatment is made on staging, by Gleason score and the PSA level. Other factors considered are age, general health, metastasis, patients view on potential treatment & their side effects. A combination surgery is useful including surgery, radiation, hormone or chemotherapy. Aggressive cancer requires radical prostatectomy, radiation therapy including (HIFU), oral chemotherapy. Castration is helpful in hormone dependent cancer. Palliative treatment is needed in terminal patient for improving quality of life. Pain is the most common symptom in metastasis cancer and cancer borne metastasis can be treated with bisphosphonates, opioids, palliative radiation therapy. Spinal cord compression due to metastasis is relieved by steroid, surgery, or radiation; other symptoms that may come across through palliative care are fatigue, delirium, lymphedema of scrotum or penis, vomiting, weightloss.^{51,52,53,54}

Conclusion

From the review of available literature it is evident that etiopathology of prostate cancer is dependent on diversified factors ranging from genetic predisposition, familial clustering, race, diet, inflammatory cytokines, androgen & its active metabolites, genetic polymorphism, trace element zinc, High fatty diet but none is a conclusive one rather most of these factors are interdependable. Similarly diagnostic value of PSA is also not conclusive as it can be raised in other benign inflammatory even normal condition also. However more research covering wider number of patients in different genetic and familial setting the role of inflammatory cytokines, trace element zinc & PSA

level, genetic markers, high fatty diet testosterone & its derivative, molecular markers like BCL2, ERK5, ki 67, e-cadherin are still the major avenues for further research on prostate cancer, the outcome of which in future will be able to define better diagnostic, preventive & curative strategies for prostate cancer patients of the world.

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