

NORWALK HOSPITAL OFFERS FREE PROSTATE CANCER SCREENINGS DURING PROSTATE CANCER AWARENESS MONTH

NORWALK, CT, August 9, 2011 -- Norwalk Hospital Urologist, Jonathan Bernie, MD will be conducting free prostate cancer screenings in September in observance of "National Prostate Cancer Awareness Month." The screenings are being offered for men between the ages of 50 and 70 who either have no insurance or no primary care physician. Sponsored by the Whittingham Cancer Center at Norwalk Hospital, and coordinated by Linda Versea, APRN, MSN, administrative manager of the Whittingham Cancer Center, the screenings will be held on September 7th, 14th, 21st and 28th from 5 p.m. to 6 p.m. in the Cancer Center.

Prostate cancer is a leading cause of cancer death in men. According to the American Cancer Society, it is estimated that approximately 240,890 men in the United States will be diagnosed with prostate cancer this year and more than 33,720 deaths are expected this year.

The free screenings, according to Dr. Jonathan Bernie, urologist and chief of robotic surgery, are intended for men between the ages of 50 to 70 years old who currently do not have a urologist or primary care physician and have no history of prostate cancer. The screening will consist of the two exams, the digital rectal exam (DRE) and a prostate specific antigen (PSA) blood test.

According to Dr. Pradip Pathare, Medical Director of the Whittingham Cancer Center and Chief of Radiation Oncology, this event is intended to bring awareness to the importance of regular prostate cancer screenings. Men at high risk should be screened at age 40 and high risk includes those with a family history of prostate cancer and/or men of African American descent.

"Prostate cancer can be cured when it is diagnosed early," Dr. Pathare emphasized. "There are usually no symptoms in the early stages of prostate cancer, and that is why regular screenings are so important. If diagnosed in its early stages, treatment options are much broader." Treatment options for localized prostate cancer include state of the art precision image guided radiation therapy and new surgical techniques such as robotic surgery.

Warning signs for serious prostate problems may include weak or interrupted flow of urine, the need to urinate frequently, blood in the urine and continuing pain in the lower back, pelvis and upper thighs.

Pre-registration is required for the prostate cancer screening. Please call the Whittingham Cancer Center at (203) 852-2148. There are a limited number of appointments available and will be scheduled on a first come first served basis.