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Welcome to the July 2014 issue of the

YOUrology Update!

Summer is in full bloom and we're deep into the dog days of summer! And that means keeping the kitchen cool by firing up the grill. So we're sharing a great recipe for Grilled Mediterranean Chicken Vegetable Kabobs that are fun to make and tasty to eat!

When it comes to most things, the best cure is prevention, and your pets are relying on you to keep them out of harm's way. With ample precaution, both you and your furry friends can enjoy the long, hot days of summer. So we're giving you some pointers to keep your pet safe.

Did you know that the first Independence Day celebration took place in Philadelphia on July 8, 1776? Be sure to read our article that lists some more July 4th fun facts; some of them might surprise you.

On the health side, we're sharing an article on the pain and pleasure of the prostate gland and a new segment we're calling Ask the Doctor where we're answering some of the most common questions we're asked.

We hope that you and your family are enjoying your summer!

- Dr. Shahram Shawn Gholami

"This nation will remain the land of the free only so long as it is the home of the brave."

~Elmer Davis

The Prostate Gland: A Source of Pain and Pleasure

For younger men, the prostate gland is a source of pleasure and fertility. However, for men over the age of 50, the prostate gland can cause much suffering, pain, and even death. Fortunately, if diagnosed early, prostate problems can be effectively treated.

The prostate gland is a walnut-sized organ located at the opening of the bladder and it contains a hole through which urine passes to the outside of the body through the urethra. This article will discuss the diagnosis and management of benign enlargement of the prostate gland.

Benign enlargement of the prostate is an inevitable consequence of aging that develops in nearly half of all men over the age of 50. Though it is not known with certainty what causes this condition, most experts believe that it is related to an increase in the by-product of the male hormone, testosterone, which is produced in the testicles.

As men age so does their prostate. An aging prostate increases in size and as it enlarges the prostate compresses the urethra and constricts the flow of urine from the bladder to the outside of the body.

The typical symptoms of benign enlargement of the prostate includes problems with urination, difficulty starting the urine stream, dribbling after urination, frequency of urination, a decrease in the force or power of the urine stream, and getting up at night to urinate.

Severe or neglected cases may cause complete blockage of urination, or urinary retention. This is a medical emergency and requires an immediate visit to the doctor or the emergency room.

Most men with enlarged prostate glands will develop urinary symptoms due to benign causes. However, some men have urinary symptoms that are not due to benign enlargement of the prostate gland. You will need to see an urologist in order to make the diagnosis and determination of what treatment is most effective for your condition.

Men over the age of 50 should have a blood test – a prostate specific antigen (PSA) - to screen for prostate cancer.

The time-honored, gold standard treatment of benign enlargement of the prostate gland is either surgical removal through an incision in the lower abdomen or transurethral resection of the prostate (TURP). Potency or the ability to engage in sexual intimacy is unaffected by surgery or the use of the wire stent. The only consequence of the surgical operation is that the ejaculation goes back into the bladder rather than out of the tip of the penis at the

time of orgasm.

Drug therapy: There are two types, alpha-blockers and hormone suppressors. Alpha-blockers, such as Flomax, Uroxatrol, and Rapaflo, relax smooth muscle tissue in your prostate and outlet of the bladder, making it easier to urinate. The side effects of the alpha-blockers include dizziness and lethargy in a small number of patients.

For most men, alpha-blockers are the first line of treatment for the enlarged prostate gland. Most men will notice improvement in their urinary symptoms within just a few days after starting alpha-blocker therapy.

The hormone suppressors Proscar and Avodart actually shrink your prostate. These drugs are referred to as 5-alpha reductase inhibitors and they suppress testosterone's effect on the prostate tissue. The side effects of Proscar and Avodart are a decrease in the volume of the ejaculation and a decrease in the PSA value by 50%.

Now there is a combination of Avodart and Flomax called Jalyn, which combines the 5-alpha reductase plus the alpha-blocker. This combination appears to have improved symptoms compared to either drug used alone.

Minimally invasive therapy: If you're unwilling or unable to take oral medications, or reluctant or unsuited to undergo surgery, alternative treatments now exist. They include:

Microwave of the prostate gland: Now there are minimally invasive treatments that don't require hospital admission or surgery to relieve the obstruction. Transurethral microwave of the prostate gland or TUMT reduces the enlarged prostate gland symptoms, preserves sexual function, and provides durable results. Treatment can be completed within 30 minutes in the doctor's office and requires only a local anesthesia. Most men report improvement in symptoms in 4-6 weeks after the procedure.

Green light laser therapy: An urologist inserts a laser fiber into your urethra via a catheter. The laser heats and destroys prostate tissue, which you eliminate over time. This procedure requires hospitalization and an anesthetic and most men can leave the hospital or the one-day surgery facility without a catheter and can resume all activities in two weeks after the procedure.

In summary, first line treatment for the enlarged prostate gland is medication, usually an alpha-blocker. When drug therapy is ineffective, then minimally invasive therapy will often solve the problem.

Nearly every man will experience prostate problems at some time during his life. Although these problems can significantly impact a man's quality of life, as well as his partner's, an annual examination and the PSA blood test are the best protection of your prostate and will ensure that it remains a gland of pleasure.

Grilled Mediterranean Chicken Vegetable Kabobs



Rosemary-Lemon Marinade

¼ cup lemon juice
3 tablespoons olive or vegetable oil
2 teaspoons chopped fresh rosemary leaves or
1 teaspoon dried rosemary leaves
½ teaspoon salt
¼ teaspoon pepper
4 cloves garlic, finely chopped

Chicken and Vegetables

1 lb. boneless skinless chicken breasts cut into
1-½ inch pieces
1 medium red bell pepper, cut into 1-inch
pieces
1 medium zucchini or yellow summer squash,
cut into 1-inch pieces
1 medium red onion, cut into wedges
1 lb. fresh asparagus spears
¼ cup crumbled feta cheese (1 oz.)

1. In shallow glass or plastic bowl, or resealable food-storage plastic bag, mix all marinade ingredients. Add chicken, stirring to coat with marinade. Cover dish or seal bag; refrigerate, stirring occasionally, at least 30 minutes but no longer than 6 hours.

2. Heat coals or gas grill for direct heat. Remove chicken from marinade; reserve marinade. Thread chicken, bell pepper, zucchini and onion alternately on each of four 15-inch metal skewers, leaving about 1/4-inch space between each piece. Brush vegetables with marinade.

3. Cover and grill kabobs over medium heat 10 to 15 minutes, turning and brushing frequently with marinade, until chicken is no longer pink in center. Add asparagus to grill for last 5 minutes of grilling, turning occasionally, until crisptender. Discard any remaining marinade.

4. Sprinkle feta cheese over kabobs. Serve kabobs with asparagus.

Ask the Doctor!

Q: *I am a 45-year old male with insulin dependent diabetes (Type I) and when I ejaculate, no fluid comes out. Is there a problem?*

A: Ejaculation is the ejection of semen out of the urethra (passageway inside the penis) when a man has an orgasm. Under normal circumstances, ejaculation propels semen forward through a man's urethra and out the tip of his penis. This is because a tiny sphincter (circular muscle) at the entrance to the bladder shuts the opening to the bladder and prevents semen from entering. Retrograde ejaculation is when the semen travels backwards into the bladder.

Retrograde ejaculation does not interfere with a man's ability to have an erection or to achieve orgasm, but it can cause infertility because the sperm cannot reach the woman's uterus. Retrograde ejaculation is responsible for about 1% of all cases of male infertility in the United States.

RE is common in diabetic men especially if the diabetes is not well controlled. It is also common with the use of alpha-blocker medications for the enlarged prostate gland. Unless you are planning to have a child, it is not an issue and does not require treatment.

Q: *I am a 30-year old female competitive runner. I have noticed blood in my urine after several races. Should I be concerned?*

A: Blood in the urine is known as hematuria. What you are experiencing seems to be what we call exercise induced hematuria also known as March Hematuria (meaning blood or blood products that spill into the urine).

The way it works is that when you exercise vigorously, some of your red blood cells break apart spilling their contents into the blood, which then makes its way into the urine. Another possibility is that your exercise is causing mild muscle damage, which is spilling muscle contents into the blood (making urine red). This is less likely. Finally, there is a small possibility that you have an issue with your kidneys that is unrelated to exercise.

While this type of hematuria is most likely what you have, there is no way to rule out other causes until you get evaluated. The best type of physician for you to see is an urologist who specializes in diseases of the kidney and bladder. He or she can take a more detailed history of when you develop these symptoms and perform a thorough physical exam.

In addition, your doctor can order urine tests to determine if you have blood cells in your urine, hemoglobin or myoglobin (all of which can be red). This will help narrow down the cause and make sure that you do not have any other kidney problems.

Q: *I am 65 years old and have prostate cancer. I take medications that are intended to decrease my testosterone and I am experiencing hot flashes. Is there anything I can do?*

A: Hormone therapies for prostate cancer cause side effects because they reduce the levels of male hormones in the body. Some side effects are common to all hormone therapies used for prostate cancer.

Hot flashes and sweating can be troublesome. They are the same as the hot flashes that women friends and relatives may have had when going through menopause. The flashes are caused when your testosterone levels drop.

They may gradually get better as you get used to the treatment. Hot flashes are typically treated with LHRH blockers because these drugs cut off testosterone production altogether. Unfortunately, in some men the flashes continue to happen as long as you take the drug.

Some men find that their flashes are relieved by a short course of hormones called progestogens, and you may want to discuss this with your doctor. Recently, there has been some evidence that a drug called venlafaxine (which is usually used to treat depression) may help with hot flashes.

Keeping Your Pet Safe This Summer

When the lazy days of barbecues and swimming pools roll around, you can make them even better by sharing them with your favorite pet. By following a few summer pet safety tips, you can keep your animal friends healthy and enjoy the months of sun and fun more.

- Never leave your pet in the car. Though it may seem cool outside, the sun can raise the temperature inside your car to 120 degrees Fahrenheit in a matter of minutes, even with the windows rolled down.
- Whether you're indoors or out, both you and your pet need access to lots of fresh water during the summer, so check his/her water bowl several times a day to be sure it's full.
- Keeping your pet well groomed will help their hair do what it was designed to do - protect them from the sun and insulate them from the heat.
- Be cautious on humid days. Humidity interferes with animals' ability to rid themselves of excess body heat.
- Though exercise is an important part of keeping your dog or cat at a healthy weight, keep the walks to a gentle pace and make sure they have plenty of water. If they're panting a lot or seem exhausted, it's time to stop.
- Bring them inside. Animals shouldn't be left outside unsupervised on long, hot days, even in the shade.
- Keep an eye out for heatstroke. Heatstroke is a medical emergency. If you suspect your pet has heatstroke, you must act quickly and calmly.



Independence Day Fun Facts

- 50 flags are flown 24 hours a day at the Washington Monument.
- Originally, the stars on the flag were arranged in a circle to denote the equality of all the colonies.
- Setting off firecrackers formed part of the early Independence Day celebrations. This made the horses miserable.
- Thomas Jefferson died on the 50th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence. So did John Adams who also signed the Declaration.
- According to one article, if Benjamin Franklin had had his way, the turkey would have been the animal on the flag instead of the bald eagle.
- Only John Hancock actually signed the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776. All the others signed later.
- Barbecue is big on Independence Day, with more than 74 million Americans planning one. We eat around 150 million hot dogs and buy around 700 million pounds of chicken.
- Fireworks are traditional on July 4th, but these were actually invented in China.

