

## Primary Care Physicians' Discussions about Prostate Cancer Screening

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### Abstract

**Introduction:** Prostate cancer is the second leading cause of cancer deaths in men. Men face difficult decisions regarding prostate cancer screening and perhaps treatment for this disease. Major health organizations agree that men should discuss prostate cancer screening with their physicians or other healthcare provider. The purpose of the study was to examine sociodemographic, contextual, and other correlates of physician-patient discussions from the view of primary care physicians.

**Methods:** The survey collected information on physicians' attitudes, beliefs, and practices related to prostate cancer and screening. Outcome variables for this study addressed physicians' usual policy when discussing prostate-specific antigen (PSA) testing and the time involved in such discussions.

**Results:** Primary care physicians reported an average time used for such discussions of about 6 minutes. Most physicians encouraged men to undergo PSA testing or remained neutral. The multivariate analysis found that most physician discussions were to encourage screening and these discussions varied by sociodemographic and contextual variables.

**Conclusion:** Data from this study indicate that most physicians encourage PSA screening in their discussions with men, but these discussions are brief. The findings should add to the current body of literature that debates issues around prostate cancer screening, provider discussions, and the time allotted for such discussions.