

CANCER**BLUE MOVEMBER? A SPECIAL MONTH FOR MALE HEALTH**

NOVEMBER month will become Movember. Do you know why?

Movember is an international organisation committed to promoting male health, namely the prevention of suicide but also prostate and testicular cancer.

Anyone can join their activities and support their projects. Men are encouraged to grow their moustache during this month and be recognised as an advocate of this cause.

Grupo HPA Saúde is the official partner of Movember

Algarve 2020 and so we leave you with some information on **prostate cancer**, the disease with the highest incidence and the second cause of mortality in the male population.

As the average life expectancy increases, there is an increase in the number of cases and mortality rate due to this disease.

When prostate cells undergo changes in their genome (DNA), become damaged or do not die when they age, they produce



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unnecessary new cells in an uncontrolled way, which then become cancer cells.

We will begin with **screening**. Screening is always the most correct option in prevention and early diagnosis, and should start at around 50 years of age. However, if there is a family history of prostate cancer, then the date must be brought forward to 45 years of age.

The most basic screening is the PSA analysis (Prostatic Specific Antigen) through blood collection and rectal examination. In this evaluation, the doctor examines the size, the consistency (soft or granular) and even if the touch is painful. The peripheral area of the prostate, where most cancers begin, faces the wall of the rectum. If your doctor finds alterations during the examination, he will most

likely refer you for a prostate biopsy.

In addition to age and family history, there are other risk factors. In Europe, some studies have concluded a relationship between diet, alcohol consumption, sexual behaviour, exposure to ultraviolet radiation, chronic inflammation and occupational exposure.

As far as **signals and symptoms** are concerned, most are not exclusive to cancer, and may appear in other situations, such as benign prostatic hypertrophy (mentioned in the July 16 edition this year). Therefore, the fact that you have some of the following symptoms does not mean that you have prostate cancer, however you should be aware of the following signals:

- Presence of blood in the urine or semen;

- Frequent need to urinate, especially at night;
- Inability to urinate, or difficulty starting or stopping the flow of urine;
- Weak or intermittent urine flow;
- Pain or burning during urination;
- Difficulty in having an erection;
- Persistent pain in the lower back, hips or upper thighs.

Finally, the **treatment**. It is not possible to say that there is a single option for all men suffering from prostate cancer, since each case is different.

Some tumours need immediate and more aggressive treatment, as they grow quickly and spread to other areas of the body, while there are cases in which immediate treatment is not necessary, only careful monitoring.

The treatment option falls on a set of issues: age, health status, lifestyle, severity, side effects and whether treatment can help or even cure cancer.

One of these options is prostatic brachytherapy, which consists in perineal placement of radioisotope seeds in the prostate. It is a minimally invasive, simple and unique, surgical procedure permitting hospital discharge within 24 hours and the possibility of returning almost immediately to normal life, unlike radical surgery or external radiotherapy.

Be Movember in November. Or rather, be Movember all year round.

Article submitted by HPA Health Group



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