

Caring for a loved one with prostate cancer

A guide to help you help him



ONCE-YEARLY
VANTAS[®]
(histrelin acetate) subcutaneous implant

VANTAS[®] may help relieve the symptoms of prostate cancer. VANTAS is not a cure for prostate cancer.



A challenging time for both of you

When a loved one is diagnosed with prostate cancer, he may experience a range of emotions. Fear, confusion, and even anger are all quite common in the face of this news. You may very well experience many of these feelings yourself as you will both be living with his disease and its treatment. Your role as caregiver is important. So, you should not hesitate to seek counseling if it will help you, and him, cope more effectively with the situation and enhance your ability to provide him with the best support that you can give.

In many cases, prostate cancer and its symptoms can be treated, and there is much that you can do to help your loved one. Learning about the disease, choosing a treatment program with him and his doctor, and enlisting the support of family and friends are all positive steps that you can take. These efforts, combined with your emotional support, can make a difference.

How this brochure can help

This brochure is designed to provide you with practical information, resources, and suggestions to help you contribute to the management and treatment of his prostate cancer.

Be sure to discuss any and all treatment plans with him and his doctor, but know that being an active and informed advocate can play an important supporting role to his medical therapy.



Taking the first steps forward

Set the right tone

After diagnosis, showing that you care is more important than ever. He may need your help in choosing a treatment plan and support during that treatment. Men sometimes have a hard time talking about their health, especially something like prostate cancer. However, you can encourage him to talk about it and support his efforts to share. For example,

- Work with him not to blame himself, you, or anyone else and work towards acceptance of his diagnosis
- Help him to open up and express his feelings
- Coordinate his care, such as keeping track of his prescriptions, knowing what tests need to be done, and finding out any other needs that you can take care of for him

Guide the communications

It's unavoidable that other people will want to know about his diagnosis. There's no one right way to tell family, friends, or coworkers. Help him decide the best way to tell others, for example, with phone calls together or family meetings. Ask his doctor, clergyman or spiritual guide, or visit www.ustoo.org for suggestions on how to tell family members about your loved one's diagnosis.

Create a support system

After family members and friends have been told about his diagnosis, the next step is asking for their support. Their assistance will not only prove helpful to your loved one, but you as well. Decide specifically who can help and how. Also, consider going outside your circle of family and friends for help with daily responsibilities by contacting a community organization with a volunteer outreach program or by hiring a home health care nurse. Here are examples of responsibilities that can be delegated.

- Driving him to doctor appointments
- Shopping for your household groceries
- Keeping him company so you can run errands or find some time for yourself
- Assisting with hosting responsibilities for get-togethers or family holiday gatherings





Following a plan of education and action

Learn about prostate cancer and its treatment

Learning about prostate cancer and the different treatments for it will help you and your loved one make informed decisions. The stage of the cancer (how widespread it is) is one of the most important factors in determining which prostate cancer therapy to choose. Another factor may be how disruptive that therapy will be to his life. It is up to your loved one and his doctor to decide on his treatment. But, as his caregiver, you may also be asked to help choose a treatment plan.

One treatment option is androgen deprivation therapy (ADT), which treats the symptoms of the disease. ADT is not a cure. One kind of ADT is a gonadotropin releasing hormone (GnRH) agonist, which works by decreasing the amount of testosterone that the body makes. This decrease in testosterone can slow the growth of prostate cancer cells.

VANTAS® is one type of GnRH agonist that may help relieve the symptoms of prostate cancer; it is not a cure. It is implanted into the arm and is designed to continuously deliver drug every day for 12 months. Because of its once-yearly administration, VANTAS may mean fewer interruptions to your loved one's life, and possibly yours. Find out more about VANTAS on pages 10 and 11.

Use and Important Safety Information for the VANTAS® Patient

- Do not use VANTAS if you are allergic to the medicine histrelin or other medicines called GnRH agonists, are a woman or are a child under 18 years of age.
- The most common side effects of VANTAS are hot flashes, tiredness, skin reactions at the implant site, testicles become smaller, urination problems, breasts become larger, erectile dysfunction (impotence), and constipation.

Help him with diet and exercise

It's no secret that eating right and exercising promote good health. Clinical studies indicate that being physically active and maintaining a healthy weight may prevent other serious diseases. Ask his doctor for recommendations about how to plan a nutritious and balanced diet and start an exercise program that's right for him.

Go to his doctor appointments with him

As a caregiver, it's important that you're involved in your loved one's course of treatment. Go with him to his doctor appointments so that you can help him remember all the doctor's instructions. Write down any questions you or he may have in between appointments, so you can ask at his next doctor's visit. It's always helpful to have a notepad handy.

Keep track of his medical information and appointments

Organizing files of medical records and information as well as keeping track of doctor appointments is very important. Ask him if it's OK if you take on this responsibility. And, if you're not related, it may be helpful to him for you to request being included on his consent forms and present at his doctor appointments. Here are some suggestions for keeping track of his information and appointments.

- Set aside a specific place, or designate a "command center," in his home where all his medical information is kept
- Create an organizational system for all the different types of papers you want to keep and have easy access to, such as insurance statements, bills, information about prostate cancer, instructions from his doctor, diet and exercise tips, etc.
- Decide the best way for you to keep track of his doctor appointments: in a date book, on a wall calendar, or electronically (computer or handheld device)

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Looking after yourself

It's important to take time for you

This may be one of the hardest things for you to do. You want to help your loved one as much as you can, but sometimes you need to focus on yourself. It's OK. Taking care of yourself is essential to your physical and emotional well being, which in turn can benefit both of you. If you become too tired, stressed, or sick, you may not be able to help him at all. Below is a list of simple suggestions to help you take better care of yourself.

- Stay healthy: eat healthy meals, exercise, and don't forget your doctor appointments and checkups
- Spend some quiet time alone or with friends
- Get enough sleep: try to put your concerns aside when you go to bed
- Pursue your own interests and hobbies
- Make time for family

Join a caregiver support group

Many caregivers have found support groups to be tremendously helpful. Support groups provide you with a place to share your feelings with others who are experiencing the same things in their lives. Plus, you may hear tips and information that will be useful in the future. Ask his doctor for recommendations, or consider a nontraditional support group. Us TOO International, a non-profit education and support network, recommends several support groups including the Circle, an online community of prostate cancer caregivers. Visit www.prostatepointers.org/circle to join.



A once-yearly approach to treatment

Ask his doctor about VANTAS®

VANTAS® (histrelin acetate) subcutaneous implant is a once-yearly hormone suppression therapy for prostate cancer. Hormone therapies like VANTAS may help relieve the symptoms of advanced prostate cancer, but are not a cure. VANTAS is different from multiple injection therapies because with one implant per year, your loved one continuously receives 12 months of medicine. This may mean less interruptions to his life and less time spent at doctor appointments specifically for the administration of a GnRH agonist. Fewer treatment administrations may mean less time in a doctor's office for you too. Here are other facts about VANTAS.

- The VANTAS implant is about an inch long and made from the same type of material as a contact lens. See picture below.



Implant shown at actual size.

- VANTAS is inserted just under the skin in the upper arm during a minor surgical procedure that can be performed in his doctor's office.
- VANTAS is designed to deliver a continuous amount of drug each day for 12 months.
- Even though the VANTAS implant provides treatment for 1 full year, your loved one's doctor will still need to monitor his prostate specific antigen (PSA) and testosterone levels while being treated with VANTAS.
- After 1 year, he'll need to make an appointment to have the implant removed. This can be done in his doctor's office, too. He and his doctor can then decide if he needs another implant.

Ask his doctor if VANTAS® is right for him

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VANTAS (histrelin acetate) implant is a drug-delivery system that contains the medicine histrelin and is placed under the skin. After it is placed under the skin, VANTAS delivers histrelin to your body continuously for 12 months. VANTAS may help relieve the symptoms of prostate cancer. VANTAS is not a cure for prostate cancer.

Important Safety Information

- Do not use VANTAS if you are allergic to the medicine histrelin or other medicines called gonadotropin releasing hormone (GnRH) agonists, are a woman or are a child under 18 years of age.
- Before using VANTAS, tell your doctor about all the medicines you take, including prescription and nonprescription medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements.
- VANTAS is placed under the skin of your upper arm. Your doctor will numb your arm, make a small cut (incision), and place VANTAS under the skin. The cut will be closed with stitches and special surgical tape and covered with a bandage. Keep your arm clean and dry for 24 hours. Your doctor will give you complete instructions. You may have some pain, bruising, and redness at the insertion site during and after VANTAS is inserted and removed. These usually go away without treatment within 2 weeks.
- Your doctor will do blood tests to check on your response to treatment with VANTAS. For example, your doctor may check your prostate specific antigen (PSA) or testosterone levels.
- The most common side effects of VANTAS are hot flashes, tiredness, skin reactions at the implant site, testicles become smaller, urination problems, breasts become larger, erectile dysfunction (impotence), and constipation.
- VANTAS can cause an increase in testosterone during the first week after it is implanted. Your symptoms may get worse during the first few weeks of treatment or you may get new symptoms. Call your doctor right away if you get new or worse bone pain, weakness or lose feeling in your legs, have blood in your urine, or you have trouble urinating or cannot urinate.
- These are not all of the side effects of VANTAS. For more information, ask your doctor or pharmacist.
- VANTAS can be expelled from your body through the original incision site. This occurs infrequently. Remember to see your doctor for routine checks on your condition to ensure that VANTAS is present and functioning in your body.
- If you would like more information, talk with your doctor. You can ask your doctor or pharmacist for information about VANTAS that is written for health professionals. More information about VANTAS is available on the internet at www.vantasimplant.com.



Visit www.vantasimplant.com for more information about VANTAS[®] and caring for someone with prostate cancer.

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