



RESEARCH WORKS
Scientists feel that we are closer than ever to a cure for cancer.
PHOTO: AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY

No one needs to die of breast or prostate cancer

I started my career in oncology in 1972. Then, as well as now, we can treat and completely cure early-stage cancers.

Cancers that are advanced and metastasized are often difficult to treat and cure completely.

We have many options in advanced diagnostic tools today: complex blood tests, ultrasound, mammography, CT, fluoro, X-ray and MRI diagnostic procedures with superior technology for imaging. In addition, we have hardware and software capabilities to fuse images of multiple modalities, such as ultrasound and MRI, and get a clearer and more accurate diagnosis of disease.

Since the breast and prostate are soft tissues, MRI is the best imaging mode. Also, ultrasound can complement MRI and other diagnostic

tools. Certainly CT, mammography and X-ray are also useful.

Tumors that are localized can also be removed surgically. In the case of the breast, it is easy to perform a lumpectomy (removing the lump, leaving the breast intact), followed by radiation therapy, external beam teletherapy or brachytherapy, to treat and completely cure the patient. In some cases with a pre-cancerous tumor in the breast, we can also treat it with radiation therapy alone without any surgery. Currently, there are a number of methods of radiation therapy that are being explored for treatment of breast cancer without the lumpectomy. Chemotherapy is often used in advanced disease cases or as a precaution to prevent recurrence. In many cases of early disease, chemotherapy is not used. Either radiation therapy alone or surgery and radiation therapy are used as a combination treatment choice.

Again, early prostate cancer can be treated with radiation therapy only or radiation therapy combined with surgery. Surgery also can be performed for the removal of the entire prostate. In general, the results from radiation therapy are better than surgery, by maintaining potency in most cases. For advanced prostate cancer, radiation therapy combined with chemotherapy, or surgery, chemotherapy and radiation therapy are possible options. The choice of treatment also depends on the size of the prostate.

With today's technology for diagnosis and treatment, we must be able to bring in patients with early disease or at the pre-cancerous stage; treat them adequately; and cure them completely, with long-term disease-free survival. However, regardless of the technique or the technology, having an experienced professional with a high level of integrity and ethics can make a big difference in the clinical outcome. Again, no one should die of breast or prostate cancer today.



Krishnan Suthanthiran
Founder of CURE Foundation

PHOTO: PRIVATE

Valuable tools

Since the prostate is also a soft tissue, MRI and ultrasound are very valuable tools for diagnosis, along with blood tests and biopsy.

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