

BLADDER CANCER: THE FORGOTTEN CANCER

Awareness of bladder cancer worryingly low, experts warn

Europe has some of the highest incidence rates of bladder cancer around the world, yet knowledge of the disease is still alarmingly low according to a new survey from the European Association of Urology (EAU). The survey, which looked at knowledge of bladder cancer and its key symptoms amongst European adults, has shown that almost 60% of European adults are either not familiar with bladder cancer or do not know how serious it can be.

Symptoms are not commonly recognised

A change in colour of urine or blood in urine is usually the first sign of bladder cancer and should prompt an immediate visit to a doctor or healthcare professional. However, over half (55%) of those surveyed did not know that a change in the colour of their urine could be an early indication of bladder cancer.

An early diagnosis of bladder cancer can significantly improve the treatment outcomes. One of the most common first indications of bladder cancer is the presence of blood in urine. According to the survey 75% of adults are not always checking their urine for a change in colour, with 22% rarely or never checking their urine.

Unwillingness to seek medical advice

The new survey has also shown that adults are unwilling to seek medical advice, even if they did notice symptoms. 20% of participants said that they would wait one week or longer before speaking to a doctor or healthcare professional if they noticed a change in the colour of their urine from yellow to orange, pink or red. The most common reason for not seeking medical advice was that people expected it to improve by itself.

Professor Arnulf Stenzl, Secretary General-elect of the EAU, and head of the urology department at the University Hospital in Tübingen (DE), specialised in bladder cancer: “With bladder cancer, catching it early is crucial as this results in better survival rates. Those patients diagnosed at stage 1 have an 80% chance of five-year survival, compared to 40% at stage 3. The results of our survey provide us with a very worrying message that there is an urgent need for increased public education to make them aware of bladder cancer symptoms and to talk to a specialist like a urologist. This will help to achieve earlier diagnosis and lower the mortality rates.”

About bladder cancer and Urology Week 2022

Bladder cancer is the fifth most common cancer in Europe, affecting over 200,000 people in every year. It is caused by changes to the cells of the bladder and is often linked with exposure to certain chemicals. Smoking, for example, has been identified as the single biggest risk factor for bladder cancer. Common symptoms are usually related to urine and include blood in urine, changes in the colour of urine, pain when urinating, frequent urination and more.

During Urology Week 2022 (26-30 September) the EAU is focusing on the importance of early diagnosis by taking blood in urine seriously as this is often the first indicator of bladder cancer. For more information about Urology Week, visit <http://urologyweek.org>. For more information about bladder cancer, please see <https://patients.uroweb.org/cancers/bladder-cancer>.

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About the survey

The new survey was commissioned by the European Association of Urology (EAU) for its annual Urology Week (26-30 September 2022). Over 6,000 members of the public from Italy, Spain, France, Germany, the UK and the Netherlands were asked about their knowledge of and experience with bladder cancer. The survey was supported by an educational grant from Astellas Pharma Europe Ltd.

Breakdown of 6,215 respondents per country:

- Spain: 1,084
- France: 1,073
- Germany: 1,030
- Italy: 1,024
- UK: 1,001
- The Netherlands: 1,003

The information was sourced in August 2022.

Notes to Editors:

For more information or to arrange an expert interview, please contact:

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About the European Association of Urology (EAU)

The European Association of Urology is a non-profit organisation which supports medical professionals working in the field of urology through many of its scientific, professional, educational and awareness-building initiatives. The overarching mission is to raise the level of urological care in Europe, and for many years this has been done through educational and scientific programmes aimed at urologists. Today the EAU represents more than 18,000 medical professionals working in Europe and beyond its borders. For more information see www.uroweb.org

About Astellas

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