

ECU Media Release

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Each year more than 12,000 Aussie blokes are diagnosed, and about 2700 die, from Prostate cancer.

It is the second largest cause of male cancer deaths, after lung cancer and the second most common cancer to affect Australian men, after skin cancer.

What makes this even worse is that the most common treatment for prostate cancer also increases patients' chances of getting cardiovascular disease and diabetes.

To tackle this growing problem, the Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia has awarded funding of more than \$244,000 to Edith Cowan University (ECU) to undertake the largest ever exercise intervention program for men with prostate cancer.

The grant has been awarded to Professor Robert Newton and postdoctoral research fellow Dr Daniel Galvão to conduct a three-year clinical trial into the effectiveness of exercise to reduce the risk factors and incidence of cardiovascular disease and diabetes among prostate cancer patients.

Professor Newton says androgen deprivation therapy (ADT) – the most commonly used treatment for prostate cancer while effective for slowly cancer growth – has several adverse side effects.

“It can increase body fat and reduce muscle which, in turn, increases the likelihood of the patient developing cardiovascular disease and diabetes,” says Professor Newton.

“These are all conditions which should respond positively to exercise prescription.”

Professor Newton says exercise programs combining cardiorespiratory (aerobic) and resistance (anabolic) exercise will be tailored to suit trial participants.

Every six months data will be collected relating to cardiorespiratory function and maximal oxygen capacity, body composition (lean mass and fat mass), bone density, blood pressure, lipids and glycemic control, physical and muscle function, quality of life and inflammatory markers.

The outcomes of the trial will provide definitive clinical guidelines for treatment of this increasingly common cancer occurring in men.

Co-investigators in the trial and Dr Nigel Spry, from Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital in Perth, and Dr Dennis Taafe, a collaborator from the University of Queensland.

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