

Height Might Affect Risk Of Testicular Cancer

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Taller men could be at an increased risk of testicular cancer, new research suggests.

The study, published in the *British Journal of Cancer*, claimed that for every extra two inches (or 5 centimetres) in height the risk of testicular cancer could increase by 13 per cent.

The lifetime risk of developing testicular cancer is one in 210 for men in the UK. So even for men exceeding the average height of British men (5ft 9ins) the risk would remain relatively low.

Cancer Research UK stressed that testicular cancer is a relatively rare cancer compared to other forms of the disease. Latest figures show an annual incidence of fewer than 2000 cases diagnosed each year in the UK accounting for just over one per cent of all male cancers.* The charity also pointed out that the cure rate for testicular cancer is one of the best for all cancers with 98 per cent of all those diagnosed with the disease surviving for at least 10 years.

Dr Michael Blaise Cook, one of the authors on the study based at the National Cancer Institute, Maryland, USA**, said: "The study showed a link between height and testicular cancer but we still do not understand how increased height raises a man's risk of testicular cancer."

Height is a minor risk factor when it comes to testicular cancer; family history and inherited faulty genes account for 20 per cent of the disease. Research shows that previous diagnosis of testicular cancer, medical history, ethnicity, undescended testis and age can also affect risk.

Sara Hiom, director of health information at Cancer Research UK, said: "Tall men should not be alarmed by this research since fewer than four in 100 testicular lumps are actually cancerous.

"But it is still important for men to be aware of any changes to the size and weight of their testicles and not delay seeing their GP if they are concerned. This is particularly true for young men as the disease is more common with under-35 year olds.

"The outlook for testicular cancer is also one of the best for all cancers - even after the disease has spread, patients can be cured.

"There is still very little information about what causes testicular cancer; it is a disease that can affect men of any height as shown by jockey Bob Champion who won his battle against testicular cancer by coming back from illness to win the Grand National a year later."

Reference

- Lerro, C., McGlynn, K., & Cook, M. (2010). A systematic review and meta-analysis of the relationship between body size and testicular cancer *British Journal of Cancer*, 103 (9), 1467-1474 DOI: [10.1038/sj.bjc.6605934](https://doi.org/10.1038/sj.bjc.6605934)

Notes

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*Compared to prostate cancer which accounts for 24% of all male cancers

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