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By Jaine Treadwell

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PSA tests set record

Published 3:00am Tuesday, March 29, 2016

Urology Centers of Alabama conducted free prostate cancer screenings last week at the Pike County Health Department and set a record number of screenings for

Sherry Wilson, Ed.S Urology Centers of Alabama, said 141 men took advantage of the free prostate cancer screenings. Each year, the number of screenings

Wilson said awareness of the benefits of the screenings and the knowledge that lives are being saved by early detection are reasons more men taking better care of their health.

"In Pike County, the number of abnormalities is about 10 percent of the men screened," Wilson said. "This is in line with the state as a whole. Since that advent of the widespread screening, the death rate for prostate cancer had declined more than 40 percent."

The reduction of advanced disease has also been remarkable, Wilson said.

"In 1991, before PSA testing was widely available, in 20 percent of men diagnosed with prostate cancer, the disease had spread to the bone. Today, that number is less than 4 percent."

Wilson said several factors that can increase the risk of prostate cancer are age. race, family history and obesity.

"The risk of prostate cancer increases with age," she said. "African American men are at special risk of prostate cancer. They have the highest rate of prostate cancer in the world. They are also more likely to die from the disease than white men."

Wilson said the chance of getting prostate cancer is greater if a close relative - a father, brother or uncle -had or has the disease. The risk is even higher if more than one close relative had been diagnosed.

Obese men diagnosed with prostate cancer may be more likely to have advanced disease that is difficult to treat.

Men who have any of the risk factors and those over age of 40 are encouraged to be screen for prostate cancer. It takes only a few minutes and those few minutes save lives.

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