

## JUST THE FACTS TREATMENTS AVAILABLE

### Draft Your Immune System!



#### FDA-Approved Treatment for Advanced Prostate Cancer

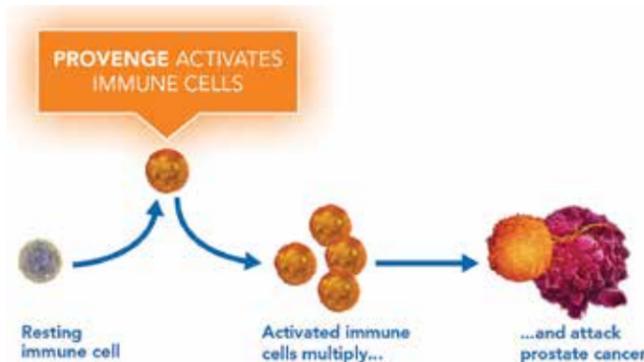
By Christopher Pieczonka, MD  
Board-Certified Urologist

If you have advanced prostate cancer that has spread to other parts of your body and is not responding to conventional treatments, it's important to know that life-extending treatment options are still available.

While you may already be familiar with treatments such as chemotherapy and hormone therapy, there is a different option—called immunotherapy.

The goal of immunotherapy is to provide a safe and effective way to treat patients by drafting their own immune system into the fight. Even though your immune system constantly works to defend you against infection and disease, sometimes crafty cancer cells can “hide” from it.

Not any longer. In 2010, the federal Food and Drug Administration approved sipuleucel-T—marketed under the brand name Provenge—as the first immunotherapy for advanced prostate cancer.



Immunotherapy works by training your immune system to seek and attack prostate cancer cells. Each dose of sipuleucel-T is individually tailored for patients through a process that collects and activates their immune cells. If you choose this therapy, your cells will be collected at a cell collection center approximately three days before each scheduled infusion.

According to Dendreon—developers of Provenge—this therapy has shown excellent results. In a clinical study, more men treated with immunotherapy lived longer than men not treated in this way, and three years after the start of this study, more men in the immunotherapy group were alive than in the nonimmunotherapy group.

Immunotherapy appears to be well tolerated. In studies, the most common side effects—chills, fatigue, fever, back pain, nausea, joint ache, and headache—were generally mild to moderate and lasted only a day or two. For more information about side effects, talk to your urologist.

Sipuleucel-T immunotherapy treatment can be completed in about a month, with just three treatment cycles. Each cycle is made up of two appointments—one to collect your cells and another to infuse the medicine into your body. After these six appointments, no future treatments should be necessary.

For more information on immunotherapy, contact your urologist or visit [provenge.com](http://provenge.com).

### The Benefit of Immunotherapy as an Early Treatment for mCRPC

In July 2013, AMP Urology's Dr. Christopher Pieczonka presented findings on the use of immunotherapy (sipuleucel-T, or Provenge) in cases of metastatic castration-resistant prostate cancer (mCRPC) to his peers in a video broadcast by *UroToday*.

Dr. Pieczonka explained that “the world changed when Sipuleucel-T was approved by the Federal Drug Administration in April 2010.” Now that this therapy, which uses the body's immune response to fight cancer, has been compared to other approved mCRPC treatments, data shows its survival rates are very favorable.”

To illustrate his points, Dr. Pieczonka described the case of a 74-year-old white male who chose immunotherapy to treat mCRPC. This man had his prostate and testes removed in 1992 to treat prostate cancer. He did well until 2008, when his prostate-specific antigen (PSA) level began to climb. By May 2012, his PSA level was 2.36 ng/mL. It was 3.58 ng/mL in November 2012.

At that point, Dr. Pieczonka ordered a very sensitive test called a sodium fluoride PET/CT scan to see if the cancer had spread. The scan showed a tumor on one of the man's ribs. National Comprehensive Cancer Network guidelines indicate immunotherapy in cases such as these, and Dr. Pieczonka said the man elected for treatment with sipuleucel-T plus denosumab, a drug used to combat bone cancer, osteoporosis, and rheumatoid arthritis.

In May 2013, a repeat sodium fluoride PET/CT scan indicated that the man's bone tumor had disappeared. A PSA test showed a drop in his level, down to 3.15 ng/mL.

This patient is one of several early stage mCRPC patients that Dr. Pieczonka has treated with immunotherapy at AMP Urology. He explained that the survival rates for patients with fairly low PSA levels, as in this case, are relatively high.

One reason for this effect may be that the body's immune system is “super-charged” in the long run by sipuleucel-T in a process called “auto-vaccination.” New studies are looking at combining immunotherapy with other types of mCRPC treatments (such as hormone therapy) to see if survival rates can be extended even further.



### September Is Prostate Cancer Awareness Month

Prostate cancer is the most frequently diagnosed cancer in men and is second only to lung cancer as a leading cause of death in men. About one in six men will be diagnosed with the disease in their lifetime and during 2013, approximately 30,000 will die from the disease.

To increase public understanding of this affliction, organizations such as Prostate Cancer Foundation and the National Cancer Institute have designated September as National Prostate Cancer Awareness Month. There's no better time to learn about this cancer, its prevalence and risk factors, its symptoms and causes, screening and prevention, and prognosis and treatment.

#### Excellent introductory resources include:

- American Cancer Society ([cancer.org/cancer/prostatecancer](http://cancer.org/cancer/prostatecancer))
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ([cdc.gov/features/prostatecancer](http://cdc.gov/features/prostatecancer))
- National Cancer Institute ([cancer.gov/cancertopics/types/prostate](http://cancer.gov/cancertopics/types/prostate))
- Prostate Cancer Foundation ([pcf.org](http://pcf.org))

Show your awareness of prostate cancer and donate to PCF by wearing a light blue ribbon during September. Ribbons and other gifts can be purchased at [prostatecancerstore.org](http://prostatecancerstore.org).

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