

Taking the prostate message onto prime time television

Prostate Cancer Awareness month started strongly in Adelaide, with local television broadcasting a strong message for men to be more vigilant in being tested for prostate cancer.

A REPORT by Paul Makin screened on Channel 7's *Today Tonight* program in early September marked the start of Prostate Cancer Awareness Month – and the message emphasized how dire the consequences of the disease are, highlighting that more than 3000 men dying from prostate cancer each year.

"In this country, we have one of the highest rates of prostate cancer in the world," said leading Adelaide urologist Dr Peter Sutherland, who was interviewed for the program.

"We don't need to be losing all these men. There are more men dying of prostate cancer than there are women dying of breast cancer. It is a very serious health issue for this nation."

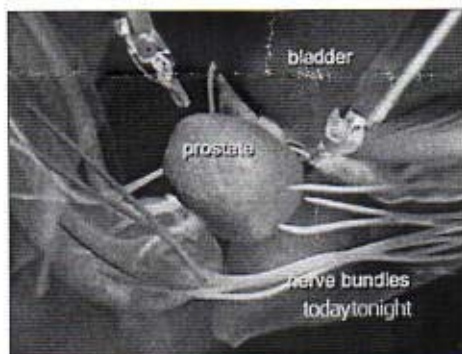
Paul Makin declared that it is now time for men to stop doing the "blinker, blocky thing" and urged them to go and get their prostate checked.

"Unfortunately an awful lot of these men at risk are missing the boat," said Dr Sutherland. "Their disease is often found after it can be cured. We are then watching these men slipping away and dying as a result of this disease."

Anthony Foundas, was not one of them. He was diagnosed with prostate cancer at the age of 40. "I



The Channel 7 report on prostate cancer examined surgery and research, including interviews with patient Anthony Foundas (above left) and researchers Luke Selth and Maggie Centenera (below right). Screen shots courtesy of *Today Tonight*.



actually felt better than I had for a long time when I was diagnosed," he said.

However, his tests showed the presence of three tumors – and traces of the disease came through a long family history. Anthony's father, and three of his uncles have all been diagnosed with prostate cancer.

Anthony had robotic surgery to remove the tumors, was released from hospital within 24 hours and was on his feet again in six weeks. He now views his

fortunate surgery result as a life changing experience.

"I have a nine-year-old son, and I now make myself more available to him now. I don't think it is anything to fear, especially if you detect it early enough."

At the Dame Roma Mitchell Cancer Research Laboratories at the University of Adelaide, prostate cancer researchers Luke Selth (recipient of a Movember Young Investigator grant) and Maggie Centenera both have family members who

have been diagnosed or died from the disease.

As a consequence, the research work has very personal significance for them; as Luke explains, it's more than just an intellectual pursuit.

"It is a hard slog at times with this type of research, and it seems slow at times – especially when you see men dying from this disease," said Luke, "but that's the goal, to find the keys that lead to a cure. That's what we're aiming for."

Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia freecall hotline is 1800 22 00 99
or visit the website www.prostate.org.au