Prostate Cancer Screening in China: Yes or No

Introduction and Objective: Prostate cancer screening is quite controversial in the field of urology. In China, we are facing different situation compared with our colleagues in America and Europe. According to the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) data, the incidence of prostate cancer was 4.34/105. Most prostate cancers were in the advanced stages at the time of diagnosis and had a short survival time thereafter. The epidemiology data of IARC were based on the data of inpatients cancer registration of China, not based on the screening data. Since 2009, we launched the PSA based cancer screening project in Beijing. To our knowledge, this was the first community based PSA screening project in China.
Materials and Methods: Through random sampling methods, male community residence older than 50 was selected to receive PSA test. The prostate biopsy indication is repeated PSA >4ng/ml, or DRE is abnormal. The ultra-sound guided transrectal 12 cores prostate biopsy was done when the participant signed the consent form.
Results: There were 3359 male community residents older than 50 who received PSA screening in Beijing. There were 87 cases that met the indication of prostate biopsy. Of participants, 61/87 received ultra-sound guided transrectal 12 cores prostate biopsy. Finally, 19 case of prostate cancer were found; 57.9% (11/19) were advanced prostate cancer. The standardized detection rate of prostate cancer in Beijing community residents was estimated at 74.1/105 which was 8 times than the data (4.34/105 person years) from IARC.
Conclusion: The current state of prostate cancer diagnosis in China is similar to that which existed in the United States during the period from 1983 to 1988, before the wide acceptance of population PSA screening. Mass PSA screening should be advocated now because most of the screened cases were still advanced cases. We should rethink the PSA screening policy in China when the organ defined diseases become the majority after decades of PSA screening.