

PHAROS

A beacon of hope in the darkness

Newsletter of the Reading Prostate Cancer Support Group (RPCSG)

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Website: www.rpcsg.org.uk

THE MAY 2022 MEETING

The May meeting was a hybrid meeting at which RPCSG member Dr Steve Allen gave a superb talk on pain management. The talk was accompanied by many interesting slides, several showing photographs and scans.

The purpose of pain is to tell the brain that something is going wrong. Pain can be visible or invisible and a definition of pain is "Pain is an unpleasant sensory and emotional experience associated with actual or potential tissue damage, or described in terms of such damage".

The perception of pain is both physiological and psychological. It can be divided into two types: Acute and Chronic.

Acute pain has an informative and protective role. A reaction to acute pain is often a subconscious reflex.

Chronic pain may indicate long term disease or be a result of damage to nerves e.g. diabetes, shingles. It is usually a longer lasting type of pain.

Pain can be a cause of hospital admissions, the most usual causes are back pain, diabetic neuropathy, arthritic problems and undiagnosed abdominal pain.

Steve then described pain modification. There are descending inhibitory pathways that modify pain perception at the spinal level. Drug treatment is the backbone of acute pain management. There are many different drug groups used, each acting at a different point along the pain pathway. Examples of these are Paracetamol, codeine, NSAIDS, Tramadol, morphine and heroin. The way in which these are administered depends upon the product and the pain present. Acute pain is treated by fast acting drugs whilst chronic pain is treated with a sustained release or transdermal method. Some drugs can be inhaled such as Entonox.

Two types of pain were described: Nociceptive and neuropathic.

Nociceptive may be acute or chronic and occurs when specific peripheral sensory neurones respond to adverse stimuli, and responds to conventional analgesics.

Neuropathic pain is pain initiated or caused by a physical damage or physiological changes or dysfunction in the peripheral or central nervous system. It is important to know that neuropathic pain comes from the nerves to the bit that hurts rather than the bit that hurts itself. It is almost always a chronic condition and responds poorly to conventional analgesics.

Causes of neuropathic pain include:

- Trauma – either post-operative or accidental injury.
- Metabolic – e.g. diabetes
- Infection – e.g. shingles
- Pressure – such as prolapsed disc or degenerative spine.
- Neurological – is most often invisible and caused by such conditions as multiple sclerosis, or post-stroke pain.

- Toxic – can be caused by chemotherapy.

The first line of therapy is usually drugs. Treatments include:

- Conventional analgesics such as paracetamol, weak opioids (e.g. codeine) and Tramadol.
- Strong opioids such as morphine, oxycodone, buprenorphine and fentanyl.
- Anti-inflammatories such as NSAIDS and COX-2 inhibitors.
- Unconventional co-analgesics including Tri-cyclic antidepressants (Amitriptyline), anti-epileptic drugs, cannabis.

There are alternative therapies available, including acupuncture, Alexander therapy, Reflexology, Cranio-sacral therapy, homeopathy and aromatherapy.

Steve finished with some information relevant to prostates. Acute pain due to prostates can be caused by infection, post operative, urinary retention, catheter problems and chemotherapy. Chronic pain is often related to metastatic disease or by nerve compression, possibly by vertebral collapse or spinal cord compression.

The approach is to treat the cause of pain first and add analgesics where necessary.

Steve was thanked for his very informative and well presented talk.

NEXT MEETING – SUMMER SOCIAL

The next RPCSG meeting will be our Summer Social event on the 24TH June 2022. It will be held in the church hall and will feature a complimentary drink on arrival, a hot and cold buffet meal, a raffle and a quiz. There will also be a musical presentation by a member.

There are a limited number of places available, the cost is £24 per person. If you would like to attend this enjoyable occasion please send an email to Alex on alexbmiles@aol.com as soon as possible and before the 15th June 2022. If you attend remember to bring your own drinks for your own consumption. The arrival time is from 7:00 p.m. with the meal served from 7:30 p.m.

GRAHAM COOK

I am very sad to report the death of Graham Cook at the end of April. Graham had been a member of the RPCSG for many years, for most of which he was on the committee. He contributed enormously to the committee and to the running and success of the group. At various times he was the Treasurer, Chairman or Social Secretary and was very enthusiastic in his tasks. He is remembered for his professional hosting of social occasions and memorable quizzes.

He will be sadly missed for his good humour, sociability and professional manner, and for being a good friend.



Graham at a Christmas Social event



Handing over a raffle prize

AWARENESS DAY ON SATURDAY 2ND JULY

We will hold another Awareness Day in Reading this year, on the 2nd July 2022. We have reserved our favourite spot that is outside Marks & Spencer in Broad Street, Reading. As usual the stand will be from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. using our gazebo and much printed material. It will be greatly appreciated if you can help at the stand at some time during the day. If so will you please get in touch with Chairman Chris Addison by email on chairman@rpcsg.org.uk. The more helpers that we have will make a more effective stand.

AWARENESS POSTERS

One of our objectives is to spread awareness of prostate cancer. To this end we have developed laminated A4 sized posters that can be displayed in public places such as libraries, gyms and spas, GP surgeries, dental surgeries, hospitals and other public places where there is a throughput of people. We have placed many posters already in Reading and Wokingham and would like to cover as wide an area as possible. You may be aware of some appropriate locations in your local area where the posters could be usefully displayed, if so, please contact Peter via email to support@rpcsg.org.uk. He keeps a record of where the posters have been placed to avoid repeated visits to locations. Many thanks in advance if you are able to distribute any posters.

RPCSG WALKS

A walk in May was most enjoyable with 10 participants. The walk was a repeat of the April walk in Theale that was very popular.

The June walk will be held on the **14th June 2022 at 10:45 a.m.** It will start at The Flower Pot in Aston and will be a circular walk of about 5 miles in lovely surroundings. Free parking is available both in a car park across the road from the pub or in an overflow car park next to the pub. The postcode is RG9 3DG. There will be a refreshment/lunch stop during the walk.

Any queries please ring Richard Brown on 07973 662925.

COFFEE MORNINGS

The May coffee morning was held at The Cunning Man in Burghfield with seven members attending.

The June coffee morning will be on the **21st June 2022**, the venue is being arranged and will be confirmed later.

A PRESENTATION BY MR ADAM JONES

No doubt many of our members have had treatment by Mr Jones at the RBH and I am excited to say that he will give a presentation by Zoom on the **28th June 2022**. This has been arranged by the Sonning Common Health Centre and will concern many aspects of prostate cancer. I have reproduced below a poster of information. You can enlarge the screen to view it, or you can see this poster and more information on the Sonning Common Health Centre by clicking this link: [presentation](#)

Note that you need to send an email in order to attend as mentioned in the poster:

**SONNING COMMON HEALTH CENTRE
PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUP**

**PROSTATE
CANCER**

DR ADAM JONES
CONSULTANT UROLOGIST

Let's **talk** about

**SONNING COMMON
HEALTH CENTRE**

MR ADAM JONES IS A DEDICATED AND RENOWNED CONSULTANT UROLOGIST PRACTISING IN READING. HE SPECIALISES IN PROSTATE CANCER AND BIOPSIES, PSA [PROSTATE SPECIFIC ANTIGEN], KIDNEY CANCER, HOLEP, AND ROBOTIC AND LAPAROSCOPIC SURGERY.

MR ADAM JONES IS KINDLY GOING TO SHARE SOME OF HIS WEALTH OF KNOWLEDGE ABOUT PROSTATE CANCER. INFORMATION WILL INCLUDE: WHAT TO LOOK FOR, HOW TO GET HELP IF YOU FIND ANYTHING OF CONCERN, WHAT TREATMENTS ARE AVAILABLE.

**TUESDAY 28TH
JUNE 2022
6.00–7.15 PM**

TO BE HELD ONLINE VIA ZOOM

PPG SONNING COMMON HEALTH CENTRE PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUP

TO BOOK YOUR PLACE AND TO RECEIVE A LINK TO THE EVENT PLEASE EMAIL [SCHCPPGG@GMAIL.COM](mailto:schcpgg@gmail.com)

PROSTATE CANCER UK

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This newsletter may refer to named providers and their products or services, and such reference expresses no inference upon any aspect of any provider's business, services or products, and expresses no recommendation or preference for any such products or service

DIARY DATES

Tuesday 14th June 2022 will be a walk starting in Aston.

Tuesday 21st June 2022 will be a coffee morning – details available later.

Friday 24th June 2022 will be the RPCSG Summer Social.

Tuesday 28th June 2022 is the Zoom talk by Mr Adam Jones.

Saturday 2nd July 2022 is our Awareness Event in Broad Street, Reading.