

Joseph Scherger, MD, MPH



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The findings of Joseph E. Scherger, MD, MPH, Vice President for Primary Care at Eisenhower Medical Center are part of the ACP Evidence-Based Guide to Complementary Alternative Medicine, a book published this year by the American College of Physicians (ACP). Scherger was approached by ACP's Brady P. Jacobs, MD, MPH to participate in the project after seeing his work on www.revolutionhealth.com, an online health service, where Dr. Scherger served as the men's health expert authoring more than 100 blogs.

For the ACP book, Dr. Scherger contributed Chapter 10 entitled "Men's Health," focusing on complementary and alternative therapies that may be used for the prevention and treatment of medical conditions unique to men including: male hormones, androgen deficiency, fitness and muscles bulk, sexual performance and dysfunction, prostate disorders, male pattern baldness and aging.

"This was about taking an evidence-based look into complementary and alternative therapies, not mainstream medicine. My assignment was to look at men's health care and give recommendations that are backed up by quality scientific studies. If there is good evidence, it's more likely to be true than if it is just someone's opinion. For instance, there is evidence that support groups lower stress and improve well-being in the cancer patient. So support groups would be considered a complementary therapy," says Scherger.

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Scherger said the main finding of the chapter is information that may seem like common sense, but is worth repeating. "The real highlight of the article is for men to avoid obesity and stay physically active," says Dr. Scherger. "Also, to maintain a healthy prostate, we know that lycopenes found in tomatoes and other vegetables are quite healthy for prostate and overall health. Eat lots of vegetables and fruits. Supplements aren't necessarily the best way to get the nutrients you need. Green and yellow veggies should be consumed on a regular basis. And, don't smoke."

Scherger also suggests that if men feel sluggish or are experiencing the effects of aging more rapidly, they might consider getting their thyroid and male hormone levels checked. "We know that testosterone declines normally as we age," he explains. "While testosterone therapy can trigger the growth of cancer, if you are in the group of men whose levels are falling faster than is normal or are abnormally low, you should definitely see a physician and consider therapy which should be closely monitored."

In addition to his duties at Eisenhower Medical Center, Dr. Scherger is also Clinical Professor of Family & Preventive Medicine at the University of California, San Diego School of Medicine and Medical Director for Quality and Informatics for Lumetra. He was Editor-in-Chief of Hippocrates and the first Medical Editor of Family Practice Management. Dr. Scherger has authored more than 300 medical publications and has given more than 800 invited presentations