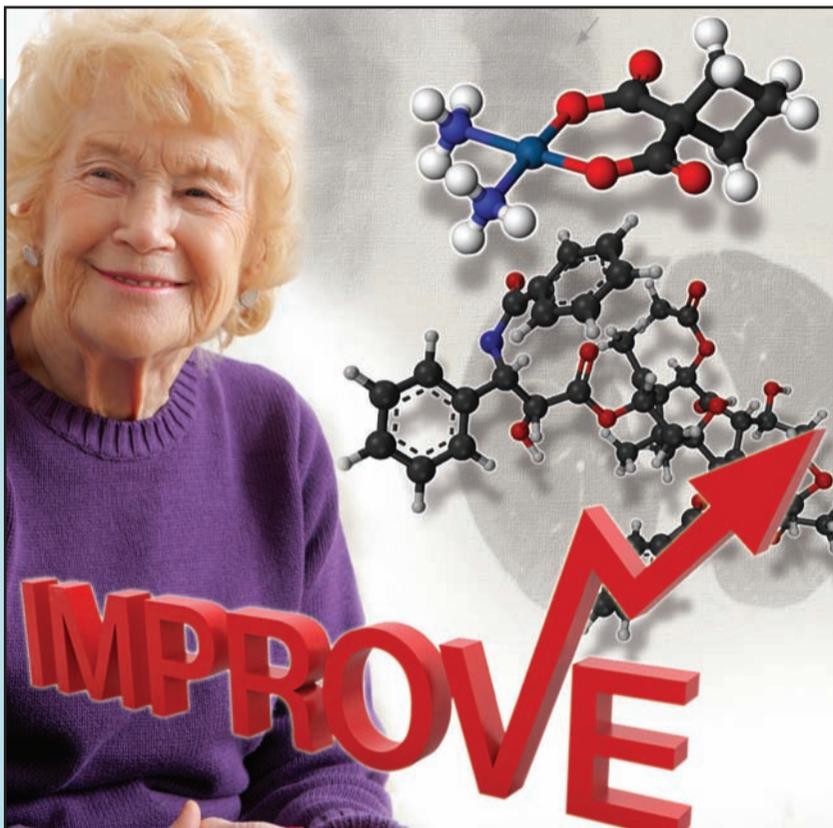


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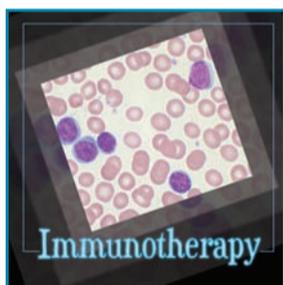


## NSCLC: Doublet Therapy Shown as OK for Fit Older Patients

BY KURT SAMSON

**F**or years, younger patients with advanced non-small-cell lung cancer have benefited from combined chemotherapy using platinum-based doublet chemotherapy, but the treatment was usually not given to older patients due to concerns about potential toxicity. A new study, though, shows that many patients over age 70 can also have increased survival without prohibitive toxicity. “At the end of the day,” one expert told us, “age is just a chronological number, and performance status always trumps age. This Phase III trial validates what some of us have already been doing with carefully selected and monitored elderly NSCLC patients. These new results are not just positive, but significantly so.”

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# Study: Men Have Overly Optimistic Expectations about Recovery from Prostate Cancer Surgery

**N**early 50% of men undergoing surgery for prostate cancer expect better recovery from the side effects of the surgery than they actually attain one year after

the operation, a University of Michigan Comprehensive Cancer Center study has found.

In addition, prior to surgery, a small proportion of men had expected to have

better urinary continence and sexual functions a year after the surgery than they had before it, which is the exact opposite of what typically happens.

“This is a belief that does not reflect

preoperative counseling which, on the contrary, alerts men to urinary and sexual problems after surgery,” Daniela Wittmann, MSW, Sexual Health Coordinator at the U-M Prostate Cancer Survivorship Program, said in a news release.

The study, published in the August issue of the *Journal of Urology* (2011;186:494-499), surveyed 152 men undergoing radical prostatectomy. All of the men filled out questionnaires before surgery, after receiving preoperative counseling. The questions asked the men about their expectations of urinary, bowel, hormonal, and sexual function a year after the surgery.

The study showed that for the most part, men’s expectations of hormonal and bowel function matched what happened one year after surgery. But, when it came to urinary incontinence only 36% of the men’s expectations corresponded to what happened a year later.

In addition, only 40% found what they expected for sexual function to be true one year post-surgery.

Also, 46% of the men found worse than expected outcomes in urinary incontinence and 44% found worse than expected outcomes in sexual function one year after surgery.

“When we provide preoperative education, we can inform men only in terms of overall statistics. We can’t predict for the individual,” Ms. Wittmann explained. “This may mean that, if in doubt, people tend toward being hopeful and optimistic, perhaps overly optimistic.”

She and her colleagues suggest that it is important to provide men with tools for urinary and sexual recovery after surgery and with support that will lead to the best possible outcome.

Patients who undergo surgery for prostate cancer at the University of Michigan participate in the prostate cancer survivorship program, which also includes partners. The program is designed to provide men with excellent surgical care along with tailored, couples-oriented support both before and after surgery to help ease recovery from the side effects of surgery.

“Although preoperative education is very important and should be explicit about the general expectations regarding outcomes, we also need to help men and their partners with the recovery process after surgery in order to help them regain their intimate lives,” Ms. Wittmann said. 