

# Identifying Genetic Risk for Prostate Cancer in Black Men

A new study is investigating the genetic differences that leave Black men more susceptible to prostate cancer.

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In the United States, after [skin cancer](#), [prostate cancer](#) is the most common cancer in men and more likely to develop in non-Hispanic Black men, according to the [American Cancer Society](#). In the United Kingdom, Black men are twice as likely to be diagnosed with prostate cancer compared with white men and almost three times likelier to die.

These alarming statistics have prompted a new study by researchers at the University of Essex to identify genetic differences linked to higher rates of prostate cancer in Black men in the United Kingdom.

In a [University of Essex news release](#), lead researchers Greg Brooke, PhD, and Antonio Marco, PhD, of Essex's School of Life Sciences said, "We have identified genetic differences between Black men and other populations in genes linked to prostate cancer, which appears to explain why some men are at higher risk of getting prostate cancer."

For this new study, researchers will analyze a DNA code that has been found in 50% of Black men that may increase their risk for prostate cancer. Researchers hope to build on this finding to seek out and identify other DNA differences that might help account for the higher susceptibility to prostate cancer in Black men.

"In the future, we wish to create a genetic test based on genetic ancestry so that we can identify men at high risk of developing the disease," the lead authors said. "Men at high risk could undergo additional screening, allowing for early detection and increasing survival rates."

Researchers said [diversity](#) in cancer research studies is key to filling these gaps in knowledge.

"Our knowledge of cancer is incomplete, especially when so much of the data we have is drawn from studies which were overwhelmingly of cancer in white people of European descent, and it's those studies which have informed our diagnostic strategies and drug development. This project, coled by Drs Brooke and Marco, directly addresses this challenge," Naomi Elster, PhD, and director of research at Prostate Cancer Research, said.

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