

Testicular Cancer

Largely due to a lack of awareness and early detection, testicular cancer will affect the lives of nearly 10,000 American men in 2019.

It is considered fairly treatable, but because testicular cancer can metastasize, meaning it can spread to other parts of the body, it is still very dangerous. The month of April is recognized as Testicular Cancer Awareness Month in the United States.

Dr. Faris AL-Gebory, general surgeon at Lawrence County Memorial Hospital, says he's yet to deal with a case of testicular cancer since he arrived last October. However, he's dealt with many instances in his past experience.

"Testicular cancer is most common in younger men," he said. "Usually, it's in the form of a painless nodule (on a testicle)."

By definition, he says, any nodule on a testicle is considered cancerous, until proven otherwise. AL-Gebory says that if a nodule is discovered, an ultrasound will be done on the testicle.

"If the ultrasound shows a mass in that testicle, we have to take that testicle out, ASAP," AL-Gebory said. "If it comes back positive for cancer, then the treatment will begin."

Treatment will consist of either radiation therapy or chemotherapy, depending on the situation.

"If you catch it early, you will be cured," said AL-Gebory. "Even if the cancer is advanced, it responds very well to chemotherapy or radiation therapy."

AL-Gebory notes that a relative was diagnosed with testicular cancer within the past month, but is recovering fine.

Still, the disease is on the rise, and can affect any male from infancy to elderly. The highest rate of diagnoses are those between the ages of 15 and 44. Largely due to the lack of awareness and early detection, it's estimated that 400 American men will die from testicular cancer this year.

"It's important to catch it and deal with it," said AL-Gebory. "If a man feels a lump on his testicle, he should call his doctor immediately, and not just sit on it."

AL-Gebory's office can be reached at Lawrence County Memorial Hospital by dialing (618) 943-3100.