your TREATMENT TOOLBOX

Tracking your progress

When you have advanced prostate cancer, your oncologist will rely on a number of tests to see how you're doing. Some indicate if your body is healthy enough to receive treatment, others reveal how well a particular treatment is working and still others show if and where the cancer has spread so it can be more accurately targeted with treatment. Tests you may receive include:

☐ **Routine blood tests,** including CBC (complete blood count), blood chemistry and tests for blood lipids, blood sugar and sex hormone levels. Blood tests can indicate anemia (low red blood cells), neutropenia (low white blood cells) and low platelets, which can tell your doctor if you are able to receive chemo. Also, tests for changes in lipid (blood fats, including cholesterol), blood sugar and androgen (male hormone) levels may be used to monitor changes in your body during hormone therapy.

☐ **Prostate specific antigen (PSA):** Used to diagnose prostate cancer, your PSA levels are tracked throughout treatment to indicate whether your treatment is successful at slowing cancer.

☐ **X-rays:** Used to show tumors in the body.

☐ **CT scan (CAT scan, or computerized axial tomography):** An imaging technique using a computer and an X-ray machine that together provide detailed pictures of areas inside the body.

☐ **MRI (magnetic resonance imaging):** A scan that uses a magnet, radio waves and a computer to display detailed pictures of inside the body.

☐ **Ultrasound:** A test that uses sound waves to find tumors.

☐ **Bone scan:** Used to detect metastases (tumors that have spread) in the bone; radioactive material is injected and collects in areas of the bone where tumors have spread.

☐ **Bone mineral density test:** A painless scan of the body that can determine bone loss that can occur during hormone therapy.

☐ **Seminal vesicle biopsy:** Removal of fluid from seminal vesicles (glands that produce semen) using a needle to ascertain the presence of cancer cells.

☐ **Pelvic lymphadectomy:** Surgical removal of pelvic lymph nodes to determine the presence of cancer cells.