

## Nutritional Disparity May Explain Higher Incidence Of Prostate Cancer In African Americans

(NAPS)—Numerous studies have found that nutrition can have a positive impact on reducing the risk of several forms of cancer, including prostate cancer. This is important information for black men, who are two times as likely to develop prostate cancer as Caucasians. In fact, a new study suggests that differences in intake of certain nutrients may offer an explanation.

The study published in the *Journal of the National Cancer Institute* identified a connection between blood levels of lycopene, a nutrient found in tomatoes, and risk of prostate cancer. Serum lycopene levels—or a measure of the amount of the nutrient in blood—were 18 percent lower among African Americans, when compared with Caucasians.

Researchers also found that men with the highest levels of lycopene had a 35 percent reduction in risk for prostate cancer. The association was even stronger for men with aggressive prostate cancer; those men with lowest serum lycopene levels had a 63 percent greater chance of aggressive disease than those with the highest serum levels.

Compared to cancers in white men and in the general population, cancers among African-American men are more frequently diagnosed once the cancer has already metastasized and spread to regional or distant sites.

Prostate cancer is, after lung



**Reduced risk for prostate cancer has been linked with lycopene, a nutrient found in tomatoes.**

cancer, the second-leading cancer killer in U.S. males. Approximately 189,000 new cases of prostate cancer will be diagnosed and approximately 30,000 men will die from prostate cancer this year, more than 20 percent of whom will be African American.

All men, but particularly African-American men, should speak to their doctor about ways to reduce the risk of developing prostate cancer. One simple change would be to eat more lycopene-rich foods such as tomato juice, sauce and soup or by adding supplements containing lycopene to their diet.