Response to Lao, Guan, Wang, et al.

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We thank Dr. Lao and colleagues [1] for their interest in our study on risks of depression, anxiety, and suicide in partners of men with prostate cancer (PC). Our findings in a large national cohort show that partners of men with PC, particularly high-risk PC, have long-term increased risks of these adverse mental health outcomes. Mental health outcomes in partners of men with PC are important public health concerns that deserve further attention. Indeed, as the number of cancer survivors grows, the psychosocial impacts on their partners will have even greater public health importance in the future.

We agree with Dr. Lao and colleagues that future studies are needed to confirm our findings and further elucidate the most susceptible subgroups. Such studies are challenging because they require linkages of data on cancer incidence, characteristics, and treatment among cancer patients as well as long-term mental health outcomes in their partners, which are rarely available in the US or most countries. Future studies focused on the partners of men with PC are needed to guide psychosocial interventions and improve outcomes in this vulnerable population.
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