

# PSA and quality of life



Gunnar Steineck  
Clinical Cancer  
Epidemiology

# PSA and quality of life



Within one month?  
Within 20 years?

# PSA and quality of life

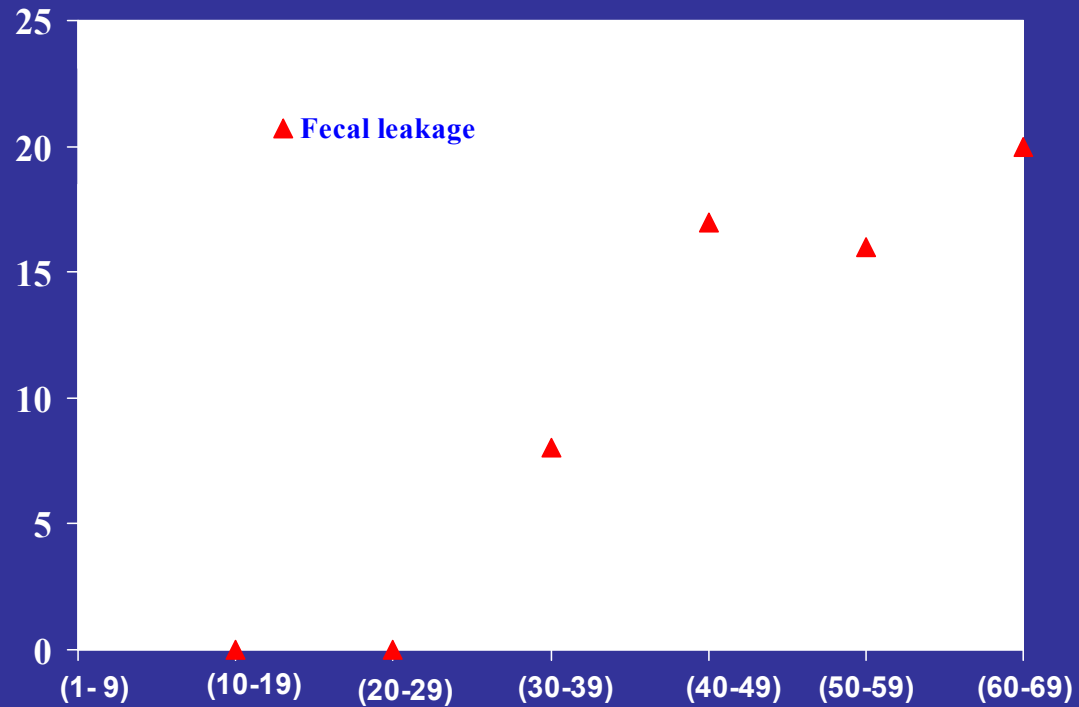
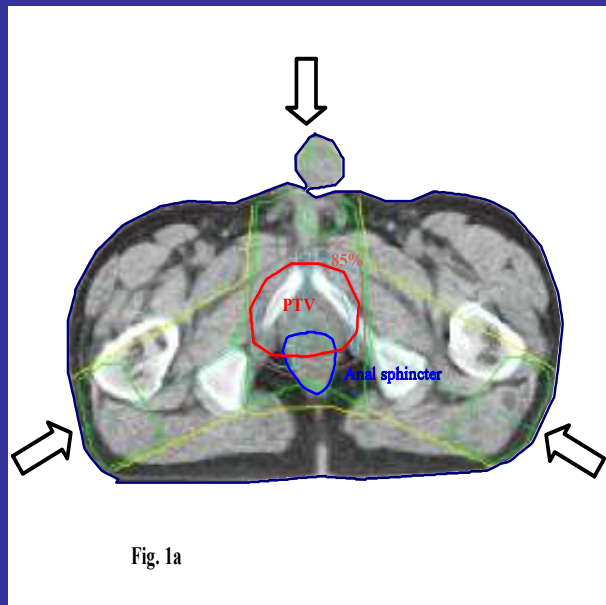


Increased mortality within 20 years?



# Radiotherapy

**Fecal leakage (%)**



**Mean dose (Gy) to anal-sphincter region**

# Long-term symptoms

## unnecessary treatment

### Radiotherapy

- Fecal leakage
- Defecation urgency
- Abdominal pain
- Problematic defecation
- Impotence
- Urinary leakage

### Surgery

- Urinary leakage
- Impotence
- Hernia

# PSA and quality of life

PSA-testing



Unnecessary  
diagnosis of  
prostate cancer



Unnecessary  
treatment



Distressing  
long-term  
symptoms

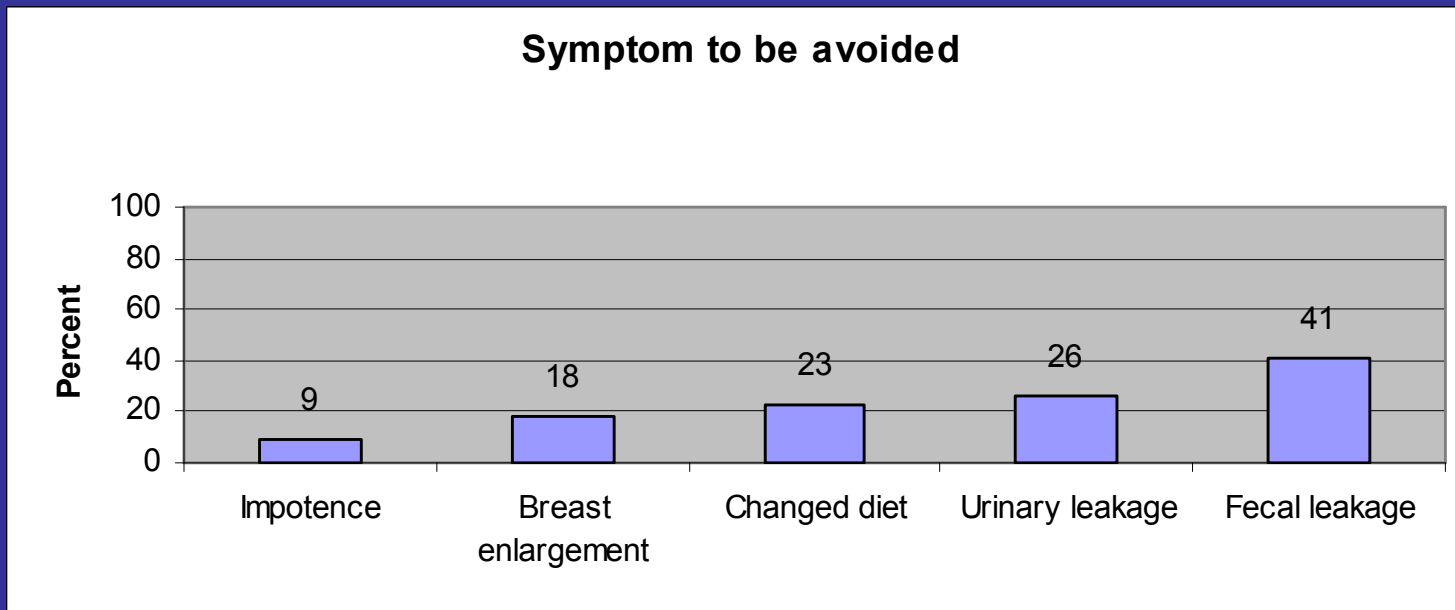


Decreased  
Quality of life



Increased mortality?

# No, I do not want to gain 10 years!



Hopfgarten et al, Eur Urol, 2006

Nordic conference April, 10  
Gunnar Steineck

# Important decision

Survival  
gain

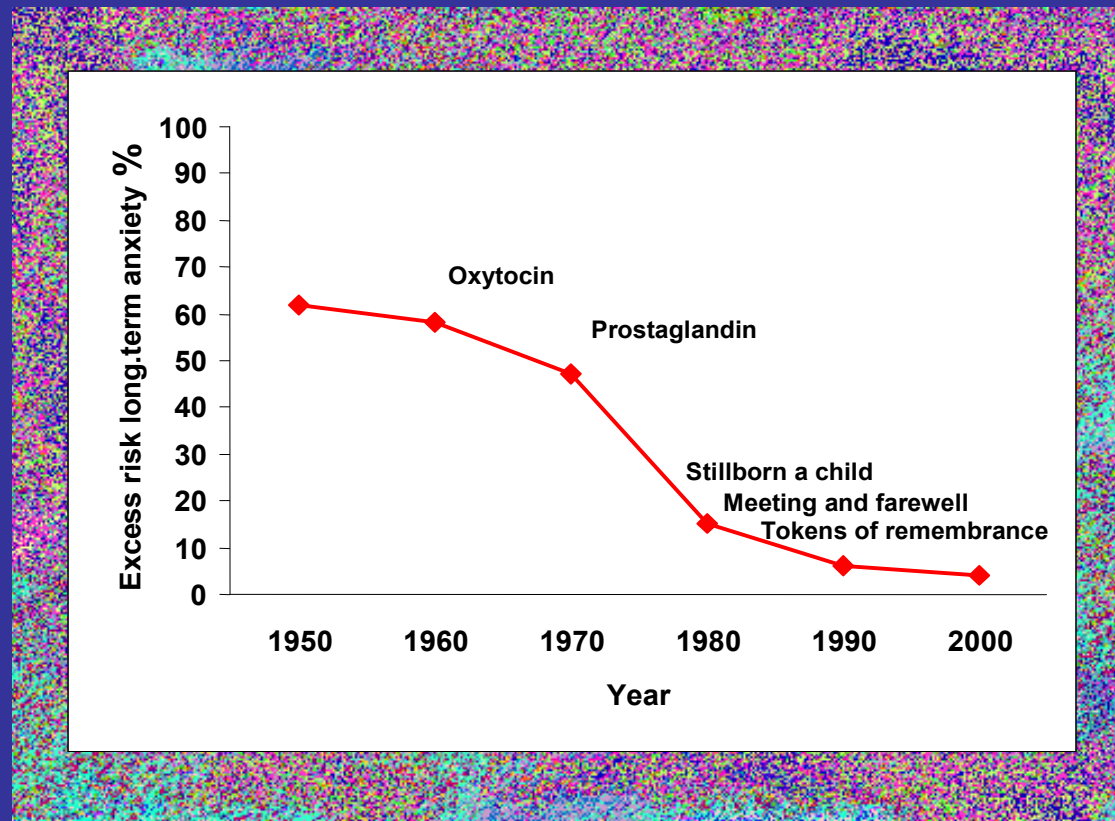
Quality of  
life gain



Survival loss

Quality of life  
loss

# Iatrogenic deaths, history



Rådestad et al,

Nordic conference April, 10  
Gunnar Steineck

BMJ 1996;312:1505-8.

# Continuous daily abuse of elderly men

- “And I guess you want us to take PSA also”
- “I recommend you to take PSA”
- “I took PSA”

# Words leading to unnecessary deaths?

- “And I guess you want us to take PSA also”
- “I recommend you to take PSA”
- “I took PSA”

# PSA and iatrogenic mortality

PSA-testing



Unnecessary  
diagnosis of  
prostate cancer



Unnecessary  
treatment



Distressing  
long-term  
symptoms



Decreased  
Quality of life



Increased mortality?

# PSA and quality of life



Within one month?

# PSA and mortality from decreased quality of life

## At testing

- 34 percent intermediate or high level of anxiety
- (Carlsson et al, Eur J Cancer, 2007)

## At diagnosis

- Large increase in mortality
- Suicide
- (Valdimarsdottir et al, unpublished)

# PSA and mortality from decreased quality of life



# Possible implications

- Consider to stop this abuse of elderly men
- Consider a careful (time-consuming) information-rich dialogue before testing for PSA-level