

HEALTH

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Fight the fear and go get tested, says Nev

An ex-boxer has traded punches for prostate advice after joining the fight against man's biggest killer to inspire the African Caribbean community to get themselves checked for the disease.

Former British middle-weight champion Neville Brown has thrown his weight behind the Inspire Health – Fighting Prostate Cancer campaign, to encourage men to get screened for the “silent killer”.

The campaign is the brainchild of Jyoti Shah, a consultant urological surgeon for Burton Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust and her colleague Sarah Minns, who took to the Burton Caribbean Association on Thursday evening to reach out to that community, whose men have a one in four chance of being diagnosed prostate cancer.

Generally, in men there is a one in eight chance of being diagnosed with prostate cancer; for African Caribbean men the chances are increased to one in four, which is believed to be down to their specific DNA.

Burton-born athlete, Neville, 51, said there is no

excuse for people not to get tested when the results are shown.

He told those who went along: “What is the taboo? What is the fear? When I found out the statistics for African Caribbean men, that one in four men will get prostate cancer, I was shocked.

“Think of your friends; you might not see them on their next birthday. That is how deadly this is. I had the big test about two or three years ago and it came back healthy;

there is no excuse when you see the results.

“I think that health is important. My reason, and I can only talk for myself, is my mother was diagnosed with cancer and we got it too late and I think that was the worst thing to find out the information too late.

“Yes, it is not good information and it is not a nice thing to know, but we need to know sooner rather than later.

“I would say to people that if you want to see your kid's

next birthday; if you want to see your kid graduate, get down there and get checked.

“If you're over 45 go get checked because this is a silent killer and, to me, we need to be on top of this as soon as possible.

“Yes, it's a scary and, at times, embarrassing feeling but your health is more important and, like I said, it is not always you but the ones around you that it affects.

“My mother affected me in a big way until today, four

years on, and I still feel gutted that part of me has gone.

“I am classed as a boxer and classed as a fighter but mine was just an activity; to watch somebody fall apart and break over six months when they didn't want to leave here, that will never leave me.

“That is why I am coming out here and saying to people get over it, whatever the fears you have; better we find out now for the loved ones and get a grip and get a hold of this. “The test is not that bad.”

Sarah Minn - Macmillan Urology Advanced Nurse Practitioner, former boxer Neville Brown, Jyoti Shah Neurological Consultant



The campaign has already seen more than 361 men get tested, with 24 found to need further treatment, but only one African Caribbean man was tested.

Neville said: “It is a little uncomfortable, but it surprised me how quick it was.

“You go in and have all these fears, but it is just the fear of the unknown. I didn't want to be a hypocrite so I took one for the lads.

“You have got to be your own doctor because there is nowhere to hide when it comes to cancer.

“Get over the ego, get over what you are afraid of and get it done, get it sorted.

“Don't let it be too late.” Also sharing his experience at the talk was Staffordshire County councillor Ron Clarke, who had to have his prostate removed after being diagnosed with the disease.

He told the crowd he and councillor Syed Hussain agreed to finance the worthwhile project and will be delivering leaflets to the African Caribbean community.

Following the talk, 16 men signed up to be screened for free at the next event on September 9.

There are spaces left and people wishing to be screened can sign up by emailing Imogen.Oneill@burtonft@nhs.uk

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