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## LETTERS

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### PROSTATE SPECIFIC ANTIGEN

#### French exceptionalism

Holmström and colleagues confirm that no single cut-off value for prostate specific antigen concentration attained likelihood ratios formally required for a screening test.<sup>1</sup> However, the number of men who would need to be offered screening to prevent one death from prostate cancer during a 10 year period is not 1068 but 1410.<sup>2</sup>



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Everywhere, practice guidelines are up to date and clearly cite the unproved benefit of screening for prostate specific antigen, as well as the adverse effects (high risk of overdiagnosis and overtreatment).<sup>3</sup> Everywhere, that is, but in France. For the fifth consecutive year, French urologists are actively promoting prostate cancer screening,<sup>4</sup> despite the arguments.<sup>5</sup>

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- 2 Bamy M. Screening for prostate cancer—the controversy that refuses to die. *N Engl J Med* 2009;360:1351-4.
- 3 NHS Cancer Screening Programmes. Prostate cancer risk management. [www.cancerscreening.nhs.uk/prostate/index.html](http://www.cancerscreening.nhs.uk/prostate/index.html)
- 4 Association Française d'Urologie. 5ème Journée de la Prostate. [www.urofrance.org/espace-general/actions-information/journee-prostate/journee-prostate-2009.html](http://www.urofrance.org/espace-general/actions-information/journee-prostate/journee-prostate-2009.html)
- 5 Brailion A, Dubois G, Zielinski O. Screening for prostate cancer: a public campaign, evidence-based-medicine and conflicting interests. *Eur J Public Health* 2009;19:222.

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