

Information for Primary Care Provider performing cancer presumption screening exam

As you may be aware, the State of Maine passed a cancer presumption act (2009 – Section 1.3q-A MRSA §328-B) that protects fire fighters who are diagnosed with cancer. This allows the cancer condition to be considered a Worker’s Compensation illness process, and entitles that firefighter to be eligible for coverage under the Worker’s Compensation system.

You will note that only certain cancers are covered:

“Cancer” means kidney cancer, non-Hodgkin’s lymphoma, colon cancer, leukemia, brain cancer, bladder cancer, multiple myeloma, prostate cancer, testicular cancer or breast cancer. [2009, c. 408, § 1 (NEW)]

In order to qualify, and be eligible for this protection under the Worker’s Compensation system, the fire fighter must have a baseline physical examination that excludes the presence of cancer at the time of that examination. Enclosed, you will find the 7 components of section 1. 39-A. MRSA §328-B that apply to the cancer presumption rule.

This exam should be done specifically for qualifying the firefighter under this presumption.

A firefighter must undergo a standard medically acceptable test for evidence of cancer and found to not have evidence of the cancers listed. The components of this exam include:

- Complete history and physical examination
- Complete family history of cancers
- CBC – complete blood count
- CMP – complete metabolic panel
- UA – urinalysis
- Males over 50 years of age – colonoscopy and prostate exam
- Females over 40 years of age – mammography
- Females over 50 years of age – colonoscopy

At the conclusion of this exam, the firefighter should receive a letter stating that he/she has completed the baseline eligibility physical exam to qualify him/her for coverage under the cancer presumption act.

“This firefighter has completed the baseline screening exam qualifying him/her for eligibility under Sec. 1 39A MRSA §328-B. This exam did not find evidence of the presence of any of the 10 cancers covered under the presumption.”