

Ribbon Vote



Green or blue ribbons - or a gold or silver walnut symbolizing the prostate (which urologists often describe as a walnut-sized gland). That's what we asked in the fall of '97. Since then we've heard of one modest poll which Howard Waage conducted on the Prostate Problems Mailing Mailing List (if you want to join the list go to the E-mail section of [Support on Caplinks](#))

More than fifty percent chose a denim ribbon. Howard Waage believes that if this mini-survey were expanded to a greater audience, the results would be the same. Howard writes: "The next questions are: how do we move on from here, who in the high end of the politics of prostate cancer activism will set the standard and when can we, as a unified group of survivors and supporters, say We now have a symbol that we can wear?" He adds: "I'm very encouraged and hope we have something we're all proud to wear as we move closer to The March."



Does this mean a green ribbon has little appeal? Not at all. Some survivors wear it with a passion. Antonio Vallone, a six-year survivor, wears a dark green fabric ribbon. Antonio Vallone's motto is *I love life. Life is friendly to me* (Amo la Vita | La Vita mi e' amica). Antonio sees green as the color of hope. Although Antonio is an engineer, he scorns emphasis on masculinity. He says: "We (at least most of us) have lost it as we knew it. We are strong, and looking ahead in our life, and fighting. That is because we are human beings, not because we are 'male'."

Far from looking for "a 'macho' symbol," Antonio Vallone wants a symbol he can share with his partner, Elizabeth Buie. Prostate cancer, Antonio says, affects the man's partner deeply. "I support the Green Ribbon (alone, in its purity) because it can represent the two parts (the two partners) involved in the struggle.... It is hope, and a scream for awareness."

No one can force this issue - every one makes their own choice.
Antonio Vallone and Howard Waage agree on simplicity.
Antonio Vallone says a ribbon is the right choice because
"anybody can pin it on a shirt collar, on a jacket, on the wall near
the door of the office. People are bound to stop and ask 'what is it
for?' And you, [either] of the two partners, can explain." Howard
Waage adds: "My blue denim ribbon was frayed a bit, which
added a little character!"

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PSA Rising Magazine
prostate cancer activist news
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