

# MEN'S HEALTH SPOTLIGHT: UNDERSTANDING PROSTATE CANCER

## What is the Prostate?

The prostate is about the size of a walnut and is located beneath the bladder, in front of the rectum and is an important part of the male reproductive system, along with seminal vesicles. It wraps around the urethra, the tube that carries urine from the bladder to the penis. The seminal vesicles, which are two smaller glands, are positioned behind the prostate.

The main function of the prostate and seminal vesicles is to produce fluids that make up semen. During ejaculation, sperm travels into the urethra, where it combines with these fluids from the prostate and seminal vesicles to create semen.



## Overview of Prostate Cancer

Prostate cancer is the second most common cancer in men worldwide, particularly affecting those over 50. It can occur when abnormal cells grow uncontrollably and interfere with the body's regular functions. Prostate cancer develops when these abnormal cells form and multiply within the prostate gland. However, not all abnormal growths (commonly known as tumours) are considered cancerous (malignant); some are noncancerous (benign).

## The Types

01

Benign growths such as benign prostatic hyperplasia (BPH) are not life-threatening. They do not invade nearby tissues or spread to other parts of the body. These growths are usually easily removed and, if they return, tend to grow slowly.

02

Cancerous growths, such as prostate cancer, behave differently. They can invade surrounding organs and tissues, like the bladder or rectum, and may spread (metastasize) to distant parts of the body. Even after removal, these abnormal cells can grow back. Therefore, when prostate cancer spreads beyond the prostate, it can become life-threatening.

## Cause and Risk Factors



### Age

Most cases occur in men over 50, with peak incidence around age 66



### Ethnicity

Higher risk in Black or African descent men



### Family History

Relatives with prostate, breast, or ovarian cancer increase risk



### Lifestyle

Smoking, poor diet, and obesity are contributing factors

## Symptoms to Watch Out For

In its early stages, prostate cancer often causes no noticeable symptoms. When symptoms do occur, they may resemble those of an enlarged prostate (benign prostatic hyperplasia, or BPH). However, prostate cancer can sometimes present with symptoms distinct from BPH. If you experience any urinary or related concerns, it is important to consult your healthcare provider.

- Lower pelvic, back, hips or upper thighs area pain
- Frequent need to urinate
- Difficulty urinating, including pain, burning, or a weak urine stream
- Blood in the urine (haematuria)
- Loss of appetite
- Unexplained weight loss
- Bone pain



## Diagnosis Methods



### PSA Test

Measures prostate-specific antigen levels in blood. Elevated PSA may indicate cancer.

### Imaging

MRI, ultrasound, and CT scans help visualize the prostate and detect spread.



### Biopsy

Tissue sample examined under a microscope to confirm cancer presence.

READ MORE

## Treatment Options

01

### Active Surveillance

For slow-growing cancer; regular monitoring every 1–3 years

02

### Surgery

Removal of the prostate gland; effective for localized cancer

03

### Radiation Therapy

Targets and destroys cancer cells; may be combined with other treatments

04

### Chemotherapy

Used if cancer spreads; kills cancer cells systemically

05

### Hormone Therapy

Blocks testosterone, which fuels cancer growth

FOR MORE INFORMATION

## Lifestyle Changes



### Diet

Maintaining a healthy diet can enhance your energy levels, strengthen your immune system, and promote overall well-being. Being mindful of your food choices and striving to maintain a healthy weight are essential. Proper nutrition not only supports your general health but also helps reduce the risk of various conditions.

### Healthy food choices may include:

- ✓ Fruits and vegetables
- ✓ Fibre-rich foods
- ✓ Low-fat food variety
- ✓ Limited intake of simple sugars
- ✓ Avoid processed foods, especially processed meats

### Exercise

Regular physical activity can benefit both your body and mind. It helps manage weight, maintain muscle and bone strength, and helps reduce treatment side effects.

With your doctor's approval, aim for one to three hours of exercise per week. Activities such as walking, cardiovascular workouts, and strength or resistance training can be good options.

### Additionally, exercise may help you:

- ✓ Support heart health
- ✓ Achieve and maintain a healthy weight
- ✓ Strengthening muscles
- ✓ Maintain bone health
- ✓ Achieve and maintain a healthy weight
- ✓ Strengthening muscles
- ✓ Maintain bone health



Pelvic floor exercises can be especially beneficial for men undergoing prostate cancer treatment. The pelvic floor is a group of muscles and tissues located between the legs that support the bladder, bowel, and sexual organs. Like any other muscle group, these muscles contract and relax, and strengthening them can help manage side effects such as urinary incontinence and erectile dysfunction.

## Take charge of your health.

## Early screening and informed choices

## can make all the difference.

Learn more

<https://flexicare.com/en-us/prostate-cancer/>

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/prostate-cancer/>

<https://www.nccn.org/guidelines/guidelines-detail?category=1&id=1459>

<https://www.asco.org/news-initiatives/current-initiatives/cancer-care-initiatives/geriatric-oncology/specific-cancer-types/prost>

<https://www.mdpi.com/2072-6643/17/13/2151>