

YOUR HEALTH & WELL BEING

Men's Health: Understanding Prostate Cancer

Prostate cancer is second only to lung cancer as a cause of cancer-related death in men. Understanding prostate cancer can help you to know the questions to ask your doctor and could even help save your life.

WHAT IS PROSTATE CANCER?

The prostate is a gland that only men have. Located in front of the rectum and under the bladder, it surrounds the upper part of the urethra, the tube that carries urine out of the body.

A man will likely experience no symptoms in the early stages of prostate cancer. Many prostate cancers spread beyond the prostate by the time symptoms are noticeable. These symptoms may be a sign of other conditions and may not mean that you have prostate cancer. However, be sure to see your doctor if you experience any of the following:

- Any block in your normal flow of urine or painful urination
- Frequent and urgent need to urinate
- Blood in the urine or semen
- Impotence
- Pain in the pelvis, hips, lower back or upper thighs

CAN PROSTATE CANCER BE PREVENTED?

Researchers are unsure of what causes prostate cancer; therefore, they are also unsure of how and whether it can be prevented. Risk factors may include the following:

- Age
- Nationality
- Race
- Family history



WHO SHOULD HAVE A PROSTATE CANCER SCREENING?

If you and your doctor decide that you should be screened for prostate cancer, you may have one or more of the following tests:

- Prostate-specific antigen (PSA) blood test measures a protein that is made by prostate cells.
- Digital rectal exam (DRE) checks for any abnormally firm area in the rectum that may be cancer.
- Transrectal ultrasound (TRUS) uses sound waves released from a small probe placed in the rectum to create an image of the prostate on a video screen. If your PSA test or DRE suggests an abnormality, a TRUS can help your doctor decide whether you should have a biopsy.

These tests may find prostate cancer early, before it spreads. Ask your doctor whether you should have any of these tests.

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