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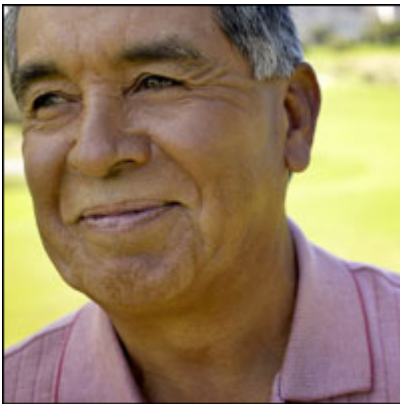
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Prostate Cancer



Prostate cancer is the most common cancer in men. Ask your doctor about the potential benefits and harms of prostate cancer screening tests.



Cancer is a disease in which abnormal cells in the body grow out of control. When cancer starts in the prostate, it is called prostate cancer. The prostate is a walnut-sized organ located just below the bladder and in front of the rectum in men. It produces fluid that makes up a part of semen.

Prostate cancer is the most commonly diagnosed cancer in men, and second only to lung cancer in the number of cancer deaths. In 2006 (the most recent year for which statistics are available), 203,415 men were diagnosed with prostate cancer, and 28,372 men died from it.* CDC provides men, doctors, and policymakers with the latest information about prostate cancer.

Symptoms

Different people have different symptoms for prostate cancer. Some men do not have symptoms at all. Some symptoms of prostate cancer are—

- Difficulty in starting urination.
- Weak or interrupted flow of urine.
- Frequent urination, especially at night.
- Difficulty in emptying the bladder completely.
- Pain or burning during urination.
- Blood in the urine or semen.
- Pain in the back, hips, or pelvis that doesn't go away.
- Painful ejaculation.



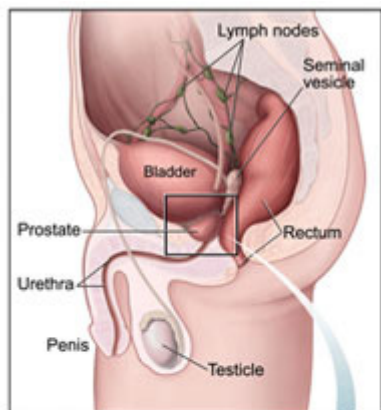
If you have any symptoms that worry you, be sure to see your doctor right away. These symptoms may be caused by conditions other than prostate cancer.

Risk Factors

There is no way to know for sure if you will get prostate cancer. Men have a greater chance of getting prostate cancer if they are 50 years old or older, are African-American, or have a father, brother, or son who has had prostate cancer.

Screening for Prostate Cancer

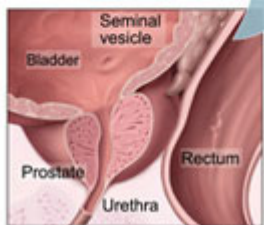
Not all medical experts agree that screening for prostate cancer will save lives. Currently, there is not enough credible evidence to decide if the potential benefit of prostate cancer screening outweighs the potential risks. The potential benefit of prostate cancer screening is early detection of cancer, which may make treatment more effective. Potential risks include false positive test results (the test says you have cancer when you do not), treatment of prostate cancers that may never affect your health, and mild to serious side effects from treatment of prostate cancer.



Most organizations recommend that men discuss with their doctors the benefits and risks of prostate cancer screening. CDC supports informed decision making, which encourages men to talk with their doctors to learn the nature and risk of prostate cancer, understand the benefits and risks of the screening tests, and make decisions consistent with their preferences and values.

Tests that are commonly used to screen for prostate cancer are—

- **Digital rectal exam (DRE):** A doctor, nurse, or other health care professional places a gloved finger into the rectum to feel the size, shape, and hardness of the prostate gland.
- **Prostate specific antigen test (PSA):** PSA is a substance made by the prostate. The PSA test measures the level of PSA in the blood, which may be higher in men who have prostate cancer. However, other conditions such as an enlarged prostate, prostate infections, and certain medical procedures also may increase PSA levels.



National Cancer Institute

Is prostate cancer screening right for you? The decision is yours. To help men aged 50 years or older understand both sides of the issue, CDC has developed several helpful guides to assist you with making an informed decision:

- [Prostate Cancer Screening: A Decision Guide](#)  [PDF - 369KB]
- [Prostate Cancer Screening: A Decision Guide for African Americans](#)  [PDF - 369KB]
- [La detección del cáncer de próstata: Una guía para hispanos en los Estados Unidos](#)  [PDF - 512KB]

* Data source: U.S. Cancer Statistics Working Group. [United States Cancer Statistics: 1999–2006 Incidence and Mortality Web-based Report](#). Atlanta (GA): Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and National Cancer Institute; 2010. Available at: <http://www.cdc.gov/uscs>.