

Prostate Cancer Awareness

What Is the Prostate?

The *prostate* is a part of the male reproductive system. The prostate is located just below the bladder and in front of the rectum. It is about the size of a walnut and surrounds the urethra (the tube that empties urine from the bladder). It produces fluid that makes up a part of semen.

What Is Prostate Cancer?

Cancer is a disease in which cells in the body grow out of control. When cancer starts in the prostate, it is called *prostate cancer*. Except for skin cancer, prostate cancer is the most common cancer in American men.

What are the Risk Factors?

Risk factors for developing prostate cancer include:

- **Age:** The older a man is, the greater his risk for developing prostate cancer.
- **Family history:** Certain genes that you inherited from your parents may affect your prostate cancer risk. Currently, no single gene is sure to raise or lower your risk of getting prostate cancer. However, a man with a father, brother, or son who has had prostate cancer is two to three times more likely to develop the disease himself.
- **Race:** Prostate cancer is more common in some racial and ethnic groups than in others, but medical experts do not know why. In 2012, African American men had the highest rate of developing prostate cancer, followed by European American, Hispanic, American Indian/Alaska Native, and Asian/Pacific Islander men.

What Are the Symptoms of Prostate Cancer?

Different people have different symptoms for prostate cancer. Some men do not have symptoms at all. If you have any symptoms that worry you, see your doctor right away. Keep in mind that these symptoms may be caused by conditions other than prostate cancer. Some symptoms of prostate cancer are:

- Difficulty starting urination.
- Weak or interrupted flow of urine.
- Frequent urination, especially at night.
- Difficulty 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.

How is Prostate Cancer Diagnosed?

Two tests are commonly used to screen for prostate cancer:

- **Digital rectal exam (DRE):** A doctor or nurse inserts a gloved, lubricated finger into the rectum to estimate the size of the prostate and feel for lumps or other abnormalities.
- **Prostate specific antigen (PSA) test:** A blood test measures the level of PSA in the blood. PSA is a substance made by the prostate. The levels of PSA in the blood can be higher in men who have prostate cancer. The PSA level may also be elevated in other conditions that affect the prostate.

If your prostate specific antigen (PSA) test or digital rectal exam (DRE) is abnormal, your doctor may do one of the following tests to diagnose prostate cancer:

- **Transrectal ultrasound:** A probe the size of a finger is inserted into the rectum and high-energy sound waves (ultrasound) are bounced off the prostate to create a picture of the prostate called a sonogram. This test may be used during a biopsy.
- **Biopsy:** A small piece of tissue is removed from the prostate and looked at under a microscope to see if there are cancer cells.

Resources to Explore:

[Prostate Cancer Overview of Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment - Article](#)

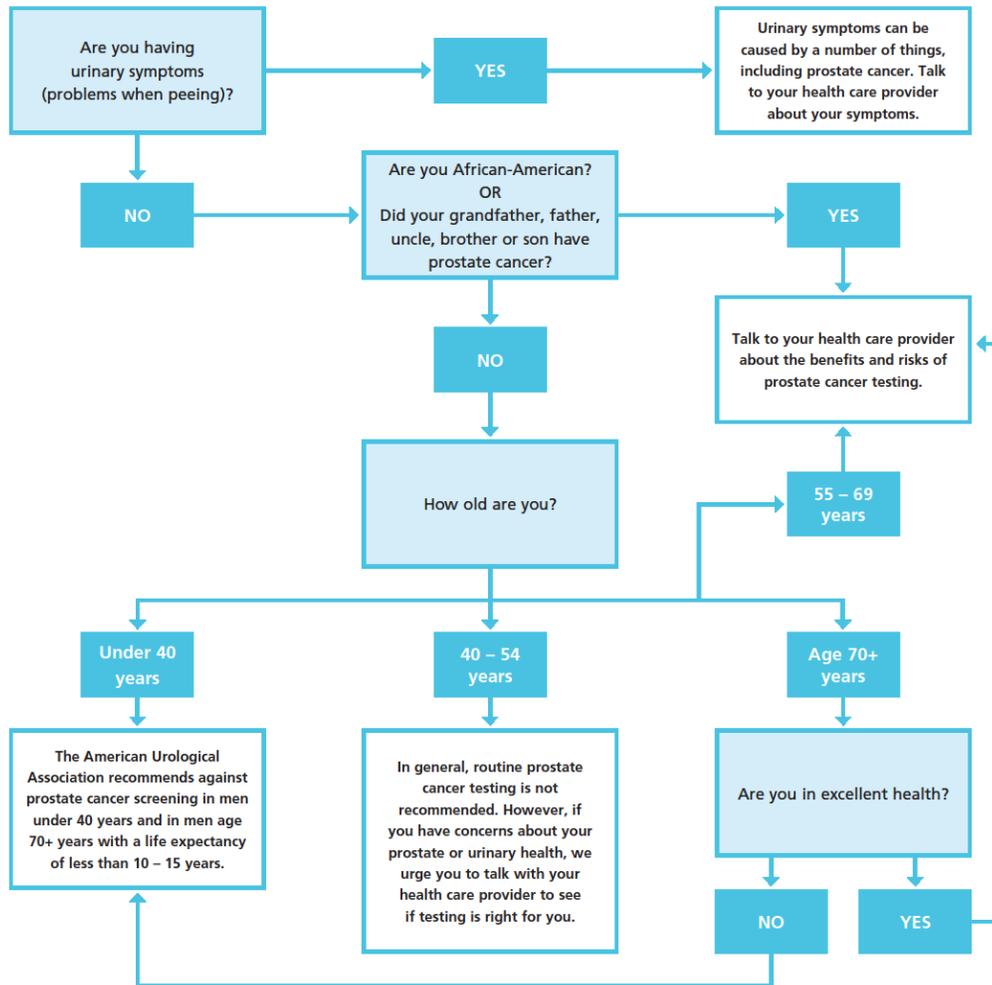
[Prostate Disorders - Article](#)

[The Men's Health Network Prostate Health Guide](#)

[Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Prostate Cancer Awareness Resources](#)

[American Urological Association Guideline for the Management of Clinically Localized Prostate Cancer \(2007\)](#)

Is Prostate Cancer Screening Right for You?



WHO IS AT RISK OF DEVELOPING PROSTATE CANCER?

Prostate cancer is the second most common cancer in men, and the second leading cause of cancer death in men. One in seven men will be diagnosed in his lifetime. African-American men and men with a family history of prostate cancer have a higher chance of getting the disease. Prostate cancer is different from many cancers because it often grows very slowly and may not cause problems. In 2012, more than 240,000 men were diagnosed with prostate cancer, and only about 28,000 American men died of the disease. Many men with prostate cancer will never know they have it unless they get tested.

SHOULD I GET SCREENED FOR PROSTATE CANCER?

THERE ARE POSSIBLE BENEFITS TO HAVING A PSA TEST.

- A normal PSA test may put your mind at ease.
- A PSA test may find prostate cancer early before it has spread.
- Early treatment of prostate cancer may help some men to avoid problems from cancer.
- Early treatment of prostate cancer may help some men live longer.

THERE ARE POSSIBLE RISKS OF HAVING A PSA TEST.

- A normal PSA test may miss some prostate cancers (a "false negative").
- Sometimes the test results suggest something is wrong when it isn't (a "false positive"). This can cause unneeded worry and stress.
- A "false positive" PSA test may lead to an unneeded prostate biopsy (tissue sample).
- A high PSA test may find a prostate cancer that is slow-growing and never would have caused you problems.
- Treatment of prostate cancer may cause you harm. Problems with getting erections, leaking urine or bowel function can occur.
- According to the American Urological Association, in asymptomatic men, the greatest benefit of routine screening can be found in men ages 55 to 69 years. Men younger than 55 or older than 69 who are worried about their personal risk factors should talk with their health care provider to determine whether prostate cancer screening is appropriate.



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