

# Prostate Cancer

September

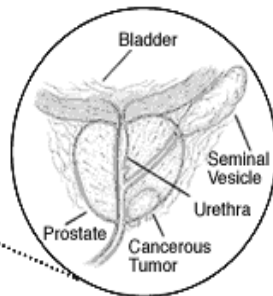
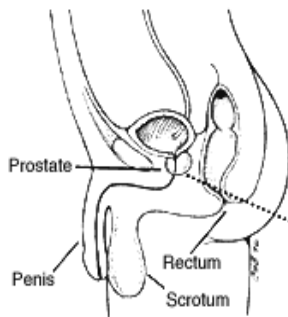
**Prostate cancer often does not cause symptoms for many years. By the time the disease may have spread beyond the prostate.**

Prostate cancer is the most common type of cancer found in American men, other than skin cancer. The American Cancer Society estimates that there will be about 218,890 new cases of prostate cancer in the United States in 2007. About 27,050 men will die of this disease. Prostate cancer is the second leading cause of cancer death in men. Lung cancer is the first. While 1 man in 6 men will get prostate cancer during his lifetime, only 1 man in 34 will die of this disease. The death rate for prostate cancer is going down, and the disease is being found earlier as well.

## Symptoms of Prostate Cancer

Prostate cancer often does not cause any symptoms for many years. By the time symptoms occur, the disease may have spread beyond the prostate.

- Frequent urination, especially at night.
- Inability to urinate.
- Trouble starting or holding back urination.
- A weak or interrupted flow of urine.
- Painful or burning urination.
- Blood in the urine or semen.
- Painful ejaculation.
- Frequent pain in the lower back, hips, or upper thighs.



[www.prostatecancerfoundation.org](http://www.prostatecancerfoundation.org)

## Factors that can increase the risk of Prostate Cancer

- **Age:** The chance of getting prostate cancer increases as a man gets older. About 2 out of 3 prostate cancers are found in men over 65.
- **Race:** Prostate cancer is more common among African-American men than white men. African-American men are twice as likely to die of the disease.
- **Nationality:** Prostate cancer is most common in North America and north-western Europe and less common in Asia, Africa, Central and South America.
- **Family History:** Men with close family members who have had prostate cancer are more likely to get it themselves.
- **Diet:** Men who eat a lot of red meat or high-fat dairy products seem to have a greater chance of getting prostate cancer. They tend to eat fewer fruits and vegetables.
- **Exercise:** One recent study found men over 65 who exercised vigorously had a lower rate of prostate cancer.

## Prostate Tests

There are two tests that can be used to detect prostate cancer without symptoms.

- One test is the Digital Rectal Exam (DRE).
  - \* In DRE the doctor feels the prostate through the rectum to find hard or lumpy areas
- The other test is a blood test called Prostate-Specific Antigen (PSA).
  - \* This test detects a substance that is made by the prostate in the blood.

Together these tests can detect many “silent” prostate cancers that have not caused symptoms.

**A high-fat diet may increase the risk of prostate cancer. Researchers theorize that fat increases production of the hormone testosterone, which in turn speeds development of prostate cancer**

## Help For Coping With Prostate Cancer

There are many sources of help available to provide support for patients and their families. They include:

- **Social Workers**- offer care in compassionate settings. Also provide education, counseling regarding lifestyle changes, and referrals to community or national agencies and support groups.
- **Individual Counseling**- Provides a one-on-one atmosphere. Here the individual is able to express more sensitive or private feelings about the illness and its impact on their life.
- **Financial Counselors**- may be available through your hospital and can help answer questions you may have about financial issues related to your medical care.



## Prostate Treatment

- **Radical Prostatectomy**- the surgical procedure to remove the entire prostate gland and nearby tissue.
- **Radiation Therapy**- involves the delivery of radiation energy to the prostate. Usually administered during an outpatient setting using an external beam of radiation. Also administered by implanting radioactive seeds in the prostate using a needle.
- **Surveillance**- a wait and see approach. This may be recommended for patients with early stage prostate cancer, particularly those who are older or have serious medical conditions. These patients have regular examinations and if there is evidence of cancer growth, active treatment is recommended.
- **Hormone Therapy**- removes hormones or blocks their action and stops cancer cells from growing.
- **Cryosurgery**- a treatment that uses an instrument to freeze and destroy prostate cancer cells.
- **Chemotherapy**- a treatment that uses drugs to stop the growth of cancer cells, either by killing the cells or by stopping them from dividing. Either taken by mouth or injected into a vein.
- **Biologic Therapy**- a treatment that uses the patient's immune system to fight cancer. Substances made by the body or in a laboratory are used to boost, direct, or restore the body's natural defenses against cancer.
- **High-intensity focused ultrasound**- a treatment that uses ultrasound to destroy cancer cells. An endorectal probe is used to make the sound waves.