

## CAN I PREVENT PROSTATE CANCER?

The causes of prostate cancer have not been clearly established. There is some evidence that an adjustment of diet to reduce intake of saturated fats and increased intake of fruit, vegetables and certain trace elements and food components may be beneficial. More information on diet can be found on the PCFA website.

## WHAT DO I DO NEXT?

By reading this brochure you have now taken the first step to becoming more aware of prostate cancer. Being informed is very important, and will help you make decisions about your health and treatment if necessary.

## MEN ONLY

Traditionally men have not been good about discussing health issues. Please don't let embarrassment or your ego get in the way of acknowledging that your body is susceptible to illness. Being aware may help you survive prostate cancer.



Talk to your doctor about prostate cancer.

## RESEARCH AWARENESS SUPPORT

The Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia's mission is to reduce the impact of prostate cancer through research, awareness and support. All donations over \$2.00 are tax deductible and enable The Foundation to continue the fight against prostate cancer.

For further information or to make a donation, please call our toll free number **1800 22 00 99** or visit [www.prostate.org.au](http://www.prostate.org.au).

 Prostate Cancer  
Foundation  
of Australia

# BE A MAN

TALK TO YOUR DOCTOR ABOUT PROSTATE CANCER



## ESSENTIAL FACTS

for you and your family

 Prostate Cancer  
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# PROSTATE CANCER IS THE MOST COMMON CANCER DIAGNOSED IN AUSTRALIA.

The latest data shows that in 2010 almost 20,000 men will be diagnosed with prostate cancer. Tragically more than 3,300 men will die as a direct cause of prostate cancer.\*

Prostate cancer is potentially curable if detected and treated while still confined to the prostate gland. Early detection can be achieved via the prostate specific antigen (PSA) blood test and the digital rectal examination (DRE).

While prostate cancer is most common in men over the age of 50, younger men with a history of prostate cancer in their family can be more susceptible than those without a family history of cancer.

This brochure is to help you better understand the prostate and prostate cancer and to help you decide whether you want a test to see if you have an early prostate cancer that may benefit from treatment. An early test may be performed on men who have no symptoms of prostate cancer, with the aim to find this cancer at an early and potentially curable stage. What is complicated with prostate cancer is that some cancers grow very slowly and don't threaten life, whilst others grow more rapidly and do. Medical experts and researchers are currently trying to distinguish the cancers that are a threat to a patient from those which are not. It is as a result of this dilemma that we believe that you should take an active role in deciding whether you want to be tested for prostate cancer. It is your choice.

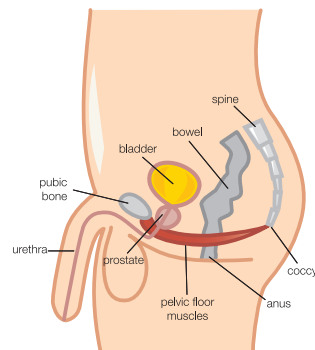
## WHAT IS THE PROSTATE?

The prostate is a small gland forming part of the male reproductive system. Its main function is to produce fluid which protects and enriches sperm. In younger men the

prostate is about the size of a walnut and is located below the bladder. It is doughnut shaped as it surrounds the beginning of the urethra, the tube that conveys urine from the bladder to the penis. The nerves that control erections surround the prostate.

## WHAT IS PROSTATE CANCER?

Prostate cancer is an abnormal growth of prostate cells, which form a lump (tumour) in the prostate. In time it will spread to other organs, particularly the bones and lymph nodes, which can be life threatening. However, prostate cancer is usually slow growing, often progressing gradually over many years. A major problem is that prostate cancer at an early (potentially curable) stage usually does not have obvious symptoms. This makes it different from other common prostate disorders, which do cause urinary symptoms.



## WHAT ARE THE COMMON REASONS WHY MEN GET TESTED, AND SHOULD I GET TESTED?

Most men will seek testing for prostate cancer for the following reasons:

- 1 As part of a general checkup usually after 50 years of age
- 2 Due to a recent experience with a relative or friend who has suffered from prostate cancer
- 3 A family history of prostate cancer
- 4 A recent onset of urinary symptoms which may have alerted the patient to that area of the body

You should make up your own mind as to whether you wish to be tested after considering what your main concern was, what your risk of developing the cancer is and after discussing the pros and cons with your doctor.

## HOW DO I KNOW IF I HAVE IT?

In the early stages of development prostate cancer is usually curable but seldom has symptoms. A routine examination by a doctor can often identify it at this stage. If prostate cancer advances and symptoms do develop, they are similar to those of benign prostatic hyperplasia (BPH) and prostatitis. These can include the need to urinate frequently, especially at night; sudden urges to urinate; difficulty in starting urine flow; a slow, interrupted flow and dribbling afterwards and blood in the urine or semen and pain during urination.

## WHAT TESTS CAN I HAVE TO CHECK?

At present there are two tests for prostate cancer:

- The Digital Rectal Examination (DRE):  
For this test the doctor uses a gloved finger to feel the prostate gland through the rectum. This may pick up abnormalities before symptoms occur.
- The Prostate Specific Antigen (PSA) blood test:  
This is a test which measures the amount of PSA in the blood. A blood test will determine whether there is an elevated reading of PSA – which can be caused by BPH, prostatitis and other prostate conditions. Only around a third of men with an elevated PSA will have prostate cancer.

## WHAT ARE THE TREATMENT OPTIONS?

A major dilemma of prostate cancer is that many cancers are slow growing and, in older men, may not need treating. Men with a life expectancy of less than ten years will rarely benefit from radical treatment of early prostate cancer. Treatment differs depending on whether the cancer is in an early or advanced stage and ranges from the surgical removal of the prostate, to radiation and/or hormonal therapy.