

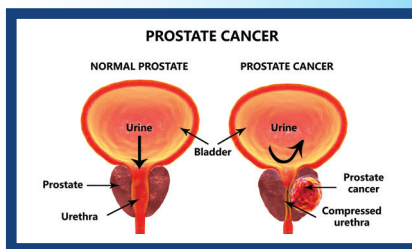
TESTING DECISION AID FOR MEN



Should I Get Tested?

WHAT IS THE PROSTATE AND WHERE IS THE PROSTATE?

The prostate is a walnut-sized gland that helps men to make semen. It sits next to the bladder.



WHAT IS PROSTATE CANCER?

IS IT HARMFUL AND AM I IN DANGER OF GETTING IT?

Prostate cancer is very common, and most men will have prostate cancer if they live long enough. Most men will not have any symptoms, and many men will not die of the disease. However, some prostate cancers can cause very serious symptoms or even death. In fact, prostate cancer is the second highest cause of death from cancer in U.S. men.

HOW IS PROSTATE CANCER FOUND?

Prostate cancer does not have any symptoms in its early stages. A blood test called PSA (Prostate Specific Antigen) can be done as a screening test (a test that looks for cancer before you have symptoms) to help us to know who may be in danger of having prostate cancer. The PSA test is not perfect and does not always show who does, and who does not have cancer. When the PSA test does find prostate cancer, many of these cancers are not harmful, but some of them can grow and become serious if left untreated.

WHAT ARE SOME REASONS THAT MEN CHOOSE TO DO PSA TESTING?

The goal of testing is to find “high-risk” or aggressive prostate cancer at an early stage and to treat and cure it before it spreads beyond the prostate. “The best medical studies in men over 50 show that PSA screening tests can lower your risk of dying from prostate cancer compared to no testing.”

WHAT ARE SOME REASONS THAT MEN DECIDE TO NOT DO PSA TESTING?

Screening can find many “low-risk” or not aggressive cancers that may not ever be dangerous. Most of these types of cancers can be safely watched without the need for immediate treatment. Sometimes, these low-risk cancers get treated with surgery and/or radiation and/or medications, and these treatments can have side effects. These include possible difficulties in urinating normally, difficulties or inability to have sex with your partner due to erection problems, and problems with bowel movements. However, these side effects can often be treated.

If you choose to be screened, there is a chance that you will be diagnosed with “low-risk” cancer. You may face pressure from your family, friends, or even doctors to treat it.

WHAT DOES THE PSA TEST RESULT MEAN?

Doing a PSA test alone does not diagnose prostate cancer. A high or rising PSA may suggest a higher chance of having cancer in your body and could mean that you need more testing. A low PSA result suggests a lower chance of having cancer in your body.

- What if my PSA test is normal?

You may not require PSA testing as often, or even at all, especially if your PSA is very low.

- What if my PSA test is high?

If your PSA level is high, or rising, your doctor may repeat the test several weeks later to make sure that the test results are true. If your PSA level is still high, or if it is going up, your doctor may send you to see a prostate specialist, called a urologist.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN I SEE THE UROLOGIST?

A urologist is a specialist of the bladder, kidney and male reproductive system, including the prostate.

The urologist may do more testing to see if there is a dangerous or aggressive prostate cancer in your body. The urologist might:

- Ask you about your family history
- Do a prostate exam (looking for a bump or lump that may be a sign of cancer)
- May recommend other blood tests, scans and/or procedures



WHAT IF I AM DIAGNOSED WITH PROSTATE CANCER?

The urologist will discuss with you whether they think the cancer is likely to be a “low-risk” (slow-growing) or a “high-risk” (aggressive) type. The best treatment depends on whether it is “low-risk” or “high-risk”:

Most prostate cancers found by PSA testing do not need to be treated (they are “low-risk”) and can be monitored by “active surveillance”. This means your doctor will watch you carefully. This method is very safe as long as the cancer stays slow-growing and non-aggressive.

For more aggressive cancers, your urologist may recommend treatment. Treatments for prostate cancer include:

- Surgery to remove the prostate
- Radiation treatment
- Hormone/medication therapy (sometimes)

IS SCREENING RIGHT FOR ME?

TAKE THE PSA SELF-ASSESSMENT QUIZ:

- ☐ Would you accept prostate cancer treatment like surgery or radiation if your doctor recommends it?
- ☐ Would you be comfortable living with untreated prostate cancer if your doctor feels that treatment is unnecessary and that it can be safely monitored with “active surveillance”?

If you answered yes to BOTH of the above, then screening may be right for you.

- ☐ Are you concerned that you would be uncomfortable knowing that you have a “low-risk” cancer and not treating it?
- ☐ If you are found to have prostate cancer, would you definitely refuse to undergo treatment if it is recommended by your doctors (surgery and/or radiation therapy)?

If you answered yes to EITHER of the above, then screening may not be right for you.

As with all medical issues, you are encouraged to speak with your doctor about a PSA prostate cancer screening test and whether it may be right for you.