

WHAT IF IT IS CANCER?

If tests show that you have prostate cancer, your doctor will plan your treatment depending on a number of factors including:

- Your general health
- The type of cancer cells found
- Results of the tests

Surgery, radiotherapy, hormone therapy and sometimes chemotherapy may be used alone or together to treat cancer of the prostate.

Surgery: removal of part or all of the prostate gland

Radiotherapy: the use of radiation treatment to destroy cancer cells

Hormone therapy: the use of drugs or surgery to interfere with the production of particular hormones in the body

Regular check-ups, including PSA tests and physical examinations, may be needed for some men in the early stages of prostate cancer, before a specific treatment is recommended.



THE EUROPEAN CODE AGAINST CANCER

The European Code Against Cancer outlines healthier lifestyle choices that can help you avoid certain cancers and improve your general health. These include:

- If you smoke, plan to quit
- Eat at least five servings a day of a variety of fruit and vegetables
- Limit your intake of fatty foods
- If you drink alcohol, limit your intake
- Do brisk physical activity every day
- Be a healthy weight
- Protect yourself from the sun and avoid sunburn, especially in children
- See a doctor if you notice a lump, a sore that does not heal, a mole that changes in shape, size or colour, or bleeds in unusual circumstances
- See a doctor if you have a persistent problem, such as an ongoing cough or hoarseness, a change in bowel or bladder habit, or unexpected weight loss

what you should know

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FURTHER INFORMATION

Anyone who is concerned about prostate cancer or about cancer in general can speak with a specialist nurse in confidence by calling the **National Cancer Helpline on Freefone 1800 200 700** or talk to your GP.

The Helpline is open Monday-Thursday 9am-7pm, Friday 9am-5pm.

Those who wish to speak to a specialist nurse can also contact us through our:

- **Walk-in service** – visit us in person at the Irish Cancer Society offices at 43/45 Northumberland Road, Dublin 4
- **Email service** – email us at helpline@irishcancer.ie
- **CancerChat** – chat live on the web with a specialist cancer nurse at www.cancer.ie
- **Message Board** – visit our online bulletin board at www.cancer.ie/forum



MAC (Men Against Cancer) is a peer support group established with the support of the Irish Cancer Society. MAC provides information, advice and support to men who have had a diagnosis of prostate or testicular cancer.

Contact MAC at:
Irish Cancer Society 43/45 Northumberland Road, Dublin 4.

Freefone: 1800 200 700

© Published by the Irish Cancer Society, June 2011
Next revise: 2013

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WHAT IS THE PROSTATE?

The prostate is a small gland about the size of a walnut and is only found in men. It is below the bladder and surrounds the first part of the urethra, the tube that carries urine from the bladder to the penis. The prostate produces a thick white fluid that makes up part of semen.



HOW COMMON IS PROSTATE CANCER

Prostate cancer is the second most common cancer found in men in Ireland. It is most common in men over the age of 50. However, most cases occur in men over the age of 65.

WHAT ARE THE COMMON PROSTATE PROBLEMS?

- An enlarged prostate gland
- Inflammation of the prostate gland
- Prostate cancer

As men get older, their urine flow can become slower and the bladder needs to be emptied more often. This is usually due to the prostate gland getting bigger with age. As a result it puts pressure on the bladder. In turn this can lead to an urge to pass urine more often than usual. Having this problem does not mean you have prostate cancer.

SYMPTOMS OF A PROSTATE PROBLEM INCLUDE:

- Difficulty passing urine
- Passing urine more often than usual, especially at night
- Stopping and starting while passing urine
- Bladder feels as though it is not completely empty after passing urine
- Pain or discomfort when passing urine

LESS COMMON SYMPTOMS INCLUDE:

- Pain in your lower back, hips or upper thighs
- Trouble having or keeping an erection
- Blood in the urine

If you have any of the symptoms in this list it is a good idea to see your GP for a prostate check. Prostate problems, including prostate cancer, are common in older men but there are treatments that can help with the symptoms. If cancer is found, it can be treated.

FACT:
MANY MEN WITH EARLY PROSTATE CANCER HAVE NO SYMPTOMS AT ALL.

WHAT CAUSES PROSTATE CANCER?

The cause of prostate cancer is unknown, but there are some risk factors:

- As men grow older, the risk of prostate cancer increases
- If a close relative, such as your father or brother, had prostate cancer your risk is greater. If they had it at a young age your risk is greater still.

HOW IS PROSTATE CANCER DIAGNOSED?

Your doctor will carry out a physical examination and will also take a blood test from you. The blood test measures PSA (Prostate Specific Antigen). A raised PSA level can point to the presence of cancer and if it is higher than normal, your doctor may refer you for further tests to check the diagnosis.

FACT:
IF DISCOVERED EARLY, PROSTATE CANCER CAN BE TREATED SUCCESSFULLY.

HOW CAN YOU REDUCE YOUR RISK?

- Eat a Healthy Diet
- Be Physically Active
- Be a Healthy Weight

