

# Prostate Cancer

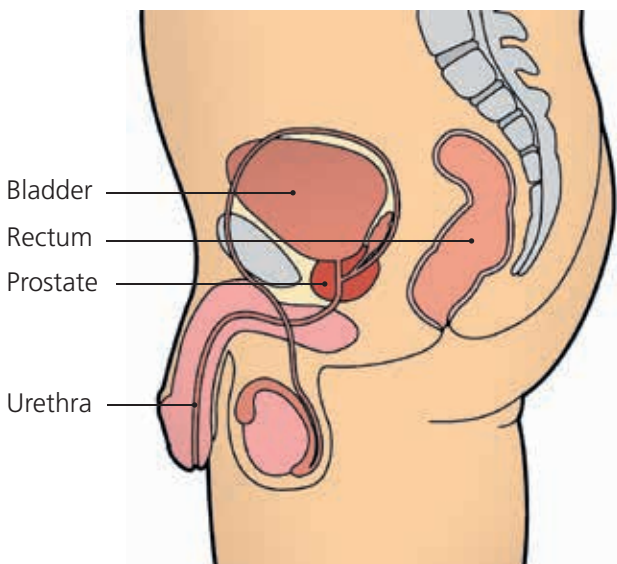
What you should know



# What is prostate cancer?

Prostate cancer is when the normal cells in your prostate gland grow in an abnormal way to form a lump called a tumour.

Your prostate is a small gland that lies below the bladder. The urethra (a tube that carries urine through your penis) runs through your prostate.



## What can increase my risk of prostate cancer?

The most common risk factors for prostate cancer include:



**Age:** As men grow older, the risk of prostate cancer increases. Prostate cancer mainly affects men over the age of 50.



**Family history:** If an immediate family member (father or brother) has had prostate cancer, you are thought to be 2 times more likely to get this cancer. The risk is higher again if your relative had prostate cancer at a young age or if you have more than one relative from the same side of the family with prostate cancer.



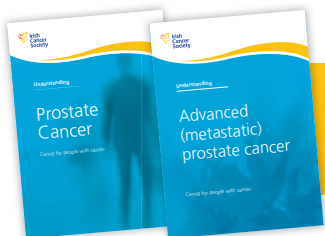
**Ethnic group:** Men of African-Caribbean descent are more likely to develop prostate cancer and are more likely to die from it than white men.

**Risk factors increase your chance of getting prostate cancer. Having a risk factor doesn't mean you will get prostate cancer. Sometimes people with no risk factors may get the disease.**

## Can I be screened for prostate cancer?

Testing for prostate cancer when you have no symptoms is called screening. There is no prostate cancer screening programme in Ireland at present.

If you are worried or feel you may be at risk, talk to your GP (family doctor).



**If you are diagnosed with prostate cancer, you can find more information in our booklets.**



## What are the symptoms of prostate cancer?

Many men with early prostate cancer have no symptoms at all. Others may have difficulty peeing or other problems with peeing such as:

- Going more often than usual, especially at night
- Stopping and starting
- Feeling like you have not completely emptied your bladder
- Feeling pain or discomfort

### **Less common symptoms:**

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

**These symptoms can be caused by other things, but always get them checked out.**

# What should I do if I have any symptoms?

If you have any symptoms or changes in your body that you are worried about, it's important to have them checked by your GP (family doctor). The chances are it will not be cancer. Getting your symptoms checked is not wasting anyone's time. The sooner cancer is spotted, the more likely you are to recover.

## How is prostate cancer diagnosed?

If your GP (family doctor) thinks your symptoms need to be looked at, you will have more tests. Tests that can help to diagnose prostate cancer include:



### **A digital rectal examination (DRE):**

Your GP will feel your prostate gland by putting a gloved finger into your rectum (back passage). They will feel if the prostate gland is enlarged or abnormal.



**PSA blood test:** Measures the level of a substance called PSA (prostate specific antigen) in the blood. A raised PSA level can be caused by cancer but it can also be raised for other reasons, so you may also need a biopsy. The biopsy will show if it is cancer or not.



**Biopsy:** A specialist will take tissue samples from your prostate and examine them under a microscope.

## How can I reduce my risk of prostate cancer?



**Get checked out:** If you are over 50, you should see your doctor every year for a check-up. If you have a family history of prostate cancer you should have regular check-ups from the age of 40.



**Be a healthy weight:** Evidence shows that being overweight or obese can increase the risk of having aggressive prostate cancer or prostate cancer that has spread.



**Eat a healthy diet:** A healthy diet can help you to keep a healthy weight. Eat fruit, vegetables, wholegrains and pulses. Limit foods high in sugar, salt and fat. Avoid processed meat and limit red meat.



**Be physically active:** Aim for at least 30 minutes of moderate physical activity a day.

**See the next page of this leaflet for tips on how to reduce your risk of cancer in general.**



# 12 ways to reduce your cancer risk



**Do not smoke**



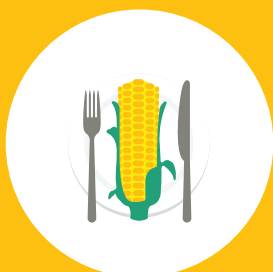
**Avoid second-hand smoke**



**Be a healthy weight**



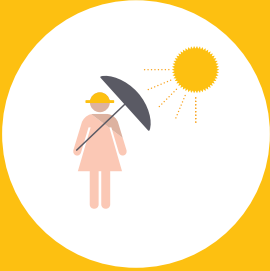
**Be physically active in everyday life**



**Have a healthy diet**



**Avoid alcohol**



**Avoid too much sun**



**Avoid pollutants**



**Get screened for cancer**



**Breastfeed your baby. Limit HRT**



**Get vaccinations –  
Hepatitis B for  
babies/HPV for girls**



**Find out if you are  
exposed to radon  
gas in your area**



# Some facts about prostate cancer



Prostate cancer is a common cancer, but most men do not die from it



If discovered early, prostate cancer can usually be treated successfully



If prostate cancer is slow-growing, you may not need treatment. Instead the cancer will be closely monitored



## How common is prostate cancer?

In Ireland, prostate cancer is the second most common cancer, with 3,400 men diagnosed each year. This means that 1 in 7 men will be diagnosed with prostate cancer during their lifetime.

# More information

If you are worried or have questions about prostate cancer or any cancer:



**Call our Cancer Nurseline**  
**Freephone 1800 200 700**



**Email [cancernurseline@irishcancer.ie](mailto:cancernurseline@irishcancer.ie)**  
We will provide you with confidential advice, support and information.

Visit our Daffodil Centres, where our nurses can give you advice about healthy lifestyles and how you can reduce your risk of cancer. To find out where your local Daffodil Centre is, email [daffodilcentreinfo@irishcancer.ie](mailto:daffodilcentreinfo@irishcancer.ie)

Visit our website [www.cancer.ie](http://www.cancer.ie) for more information on prostate cancer and ways you can reduce your risk of cancer.

## Want to stop smoking?

Quitting smoking is one of the best things you can do to reduce your risk of cancer.

If you would like advice or support on quitting, call the HSE Quit Team on CallSave **1800 201 203**, Freetext **QUIT** to **50100** or visit [www.quit.ie](http://www.quit.ie)



**Irish  
Cancer  
Society**