

Treatment of prostate cancer

There are a number of ways to manage prostate cancer. Following diagnosis, your nurse or doctor will help you choose the most appropriate form of treatment for you.

The symptoms outlined in this leaflet are often caused by something less serious and don't usually mean it's cancer. However, finding cancer early makes it more treatable and a trip to your doctor could save your life. So if in doubt get it checked out. If it's not serious, your mind will be put at rest. You certainly won't be wasting anyone's time.



If you have any concerns about cancer you can talk to one of our specialist nurses on the Cancer Focus NI free information and support NurseLine

0800 783 3339

Monday to Friday 9am - 1pm
Calls are free from a landline
nurseline@cancerfocusni.org



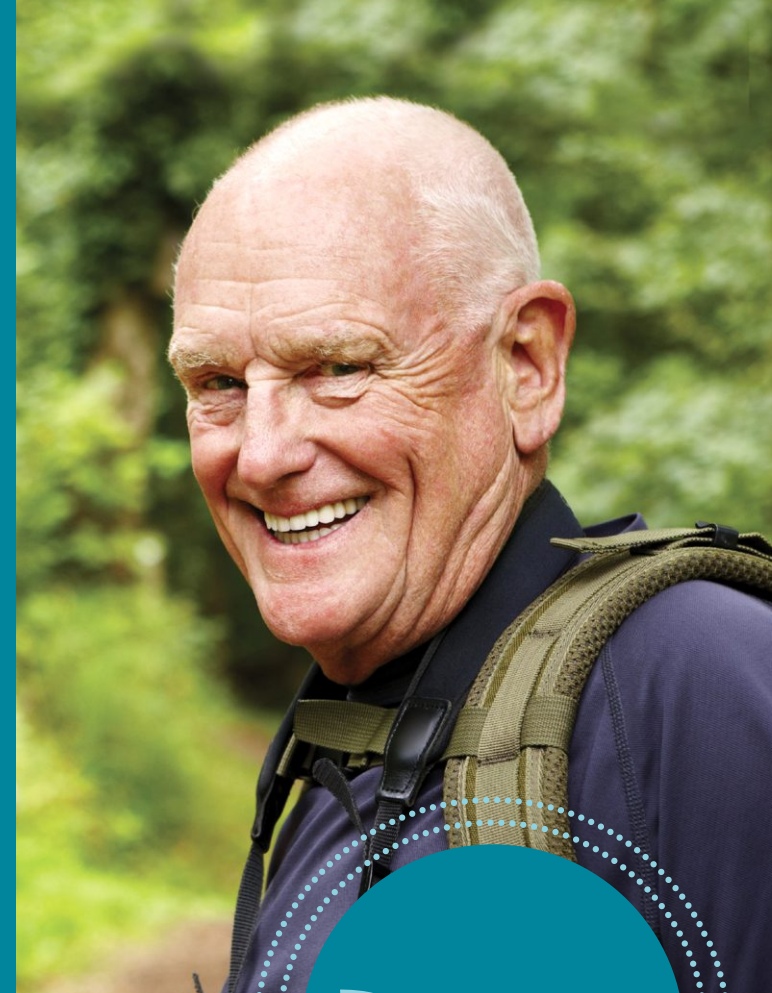
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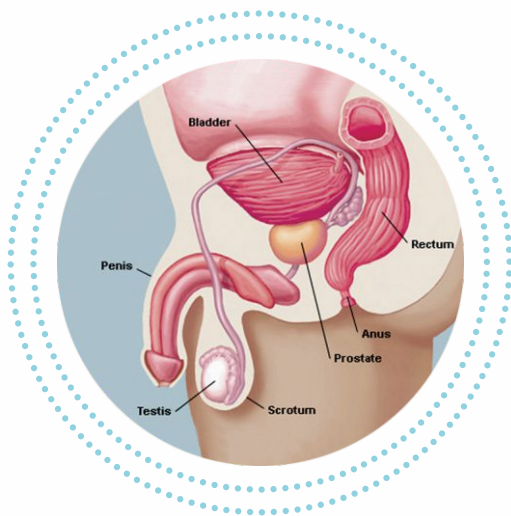
**Focus on
Prostate
Cancer**

In Northern Ireland over 1,100 men are diagnosed with prostate cancer every year, making it the most common form of cancer in men. It is the second most common cause of cancer death in men with approximately 270 men dying from this disease every year in Northern Ireland. Prostate cancer is a common but often slow growing cancer usually affecting men over the age of 40.

What is prostate cancer?

The prostate is a small gland about the size of a walnut that lies just below the bladder. Its normal role is to produce secretions that help nourish the sperm.

Prostate cancer develops when one cell in the prostate starts to multiply out of control, thus forming a tumour. In many cases prostate cancer is slow growing and may not cause major problems; however, sometimes it is faster growing and will require prompt treatment.



What causes prostate cancer?

The exact cause of prostate cancer is still unknown; however, certain things have been shown to increase a man's risk of developing this disease.

Age:

The risk of developing prostate cancer increases as a man gets older. Prostate cancer is rare in men under 40 years, whilst 70% of cases occur in men aged over 65 years.

Family history:

A family history of prostate cancer increases your risk of developing this disease. If you have a close relative i.e. father or brother diagnosed with prostate cancer, your risk of developing prostate cancer is two to three times higher. If there is more than one close relative, your risk will increase further. Your risk is also higher if your relative was diagnosed before age 60, or if they died from prostate cancer.

Ethnicity:

Men of black ethnicity are three times more likely to develop prostate cancer than white/caucasian men.

Lifestyle:

As with all cancers, a healthy diet and lifestyle may help reduce your risk of developing prostate cancer. This includes:

- Eating a healthy diet which is low in fat, high in fruit and vegetables.
- Maintaining a healthy body weight.
- Doing some form of physical activity every day.
- Not smoking.

For help in stopping smoking go to www.want2stop.info

Symptoms of prostate cancer

Men with early prostate cancer are unlikely to have any symptoms. However, when symptoms do appear they may include:

- Poor urine flow
- Difficulty passing urine
- Passing urine more frequently, especially at night
- Leaking urine
- Urgency to pass urine
- Blood in urine
- Blood in semen
- Back / bone pain

How is prostate cancer diagnosed?

Prostate cancer is diagnosed by a number of tests. These include:

PSA test

This test measures the level of a protein called Prostate Specific Antigen (PSA) in the blood. Prostate cancer increases the level of this protein; however, there are other factors which may also increase this level e.g. infection. For this reason the PSA test is not a stand-alone diagnostic tool.

Digital Rectal Examination (DRE)

DRE involves a doctor or nurse feeling the prostate gland through the wall of the back passage using a finger. They will be able to identify any hard or irregular areas which may be a sign of prostate cancer.

Prostate biopsy

This involves removing small amounts of prostate tissue to determine if cancer cells are present. Depending on results of the above tests your doctor may proceed with further diagnostic tests, e.g. bone scan, CT scan, MRI scan.