



Together we will beat cancer

# Spot prostate cancer early



# Take charge

In this leaflet you'll find possible signs of prostate cancer, tips for telling your doctor if something's not quite right, and some facts about the PSA test.

If you've spotted something unusual, remember you're in charge of your health. In most cases it won't be cancer – but it's always best to get it checked by your doctor.

## What is a prostate

Most people who were born male have a prostate. It's a walnut-sized gland in the pelvis that makes the fluid part of semen.



# Listen to your body

You know your body best. So, tell your doctor if you notice a change that's not normal for you, or lasts for a while.

Early prostate cancer often has no symptoms, and lots of the symptoms below can be down to other conditions. But it's still worth telling your doctor if you notice any of these.

- Peeing more than normal
- Regularly needing to pee urgently
- Needing to pee lots during the night
- Finding it hard to pee
- Difficulty getting or keeping an erection
- Blood in your pee, even if it only happens once

Even if it's not on the list above, if it's not normal for you, get it checked out. In most cases it won't be cancer. But if it is, finding it early can make a real difference.

## What affects your risk?

**Age:** As with most cancers, the risk of prostate cancer increases with age, and most cases are in people over 50.

**Ethnicity:** Black men may be at a higher risk of prostate cancer.

**Family history:** People with a family history of prostate cancer may be at a higher risk.

# Why is there no screening for prostate cancer?

There's no screening for prostate cancer in the UK because we don't have a reliable enough test.

The prostate specific antigen (PSA) test is sometimes used to help diagnose prostate cancer. But it is not good enough to use as a screening test in people without symptoms. It can miss some cancers, and pick up cancers that wouldn't have gone on to cause any harm.

## Understanding the PSA test

The PSA test measures the amount of PSA, released from the prostate, in the blood.

### PSA level



It's normal for all men to have some PSA in their blood.

A high level of PSA can be a sign of prostate cancer, but...

### It can also be affected by lots of other things:



An infection



Vigorous exercise



Prostate stimulation, recent ejaculation or anal sex



Some medicines

Men over the age of 50 can ask their doctor about the PSA test if they want one. But evidence shows that giving men without symptoms a PSA test does not save lives from prostate cancer. And it can result in some men having unnecessary treatment.

# Talk to your doctor

Talking to your doctor isn't always easy. Here are our tips to get the most out of your appointment:



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**Be honest.** Tell the doctor about anything that's not normal for you, even if it doesn't seem that important or you think it might be a bit embarrassing. They've seen and heard it all before.



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**Be thorough.** Mention all your symptoms and don't put it down to 'just getting older', or assume it's part of another health condition. If it's something that's bothering you, then your doctor will want to hear about it.



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**Stick with it.** Don't worry you might be wasting your doctor's time. Even if you've been to see them already, they want to know if your symptoms haven't gone away, or if something still doesn't feel quite right.



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**Be prepared.** Have a think about the changes, and roughly how long you've had them for. Writing down the things you want to say can help. And you can always bring a trusted friend or family member with you for support.

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# Research is beating cancer

Thanks to research there are a range of good options to treat prostate cancer. Treatments are kinder and more effective than ever.



## We're online...

Learn more about spotting cancer early, including information about screening across the UK, at [cruk.org/spotcancerearly](https://cruk.org/spotcancerearly)



## ...and on the phone

Our Nurse Helpline is there if you're looking for any information or support. Just call **0808 800 4040**.

To provide any feedback on this leaflet or if you would like to know more about the sources used to create it, call **020 3469 8333** or email [publications@cancer.org.uk](mailto:publications@cancer.org.uk)

And if you have any questions about Cancer Research UK or would like to support us call **0300 123 1022**.



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