

Health Bubble

CHAMP –SHARING TOMORROWS QUALITY HEALTH TODAY

PROSTATE DISEASE

ENLARGED PROSTATE (BPH)

This is the condition in which the prostate gland is enlarged and not cancerous. Benign prostatic hyperplasia is also called benign prostatic hypertrophy or benign prostatic obstruction.

The prostate goes through two main growth periods as a man ages. The first occurs early in puberty, when the prostate doubles in size. The second phase of growth begins around age 25 and continues during most of a man's life. Benign prostatic hyperplasia often occurs with the second growth phase.

As the prostate grows, it presses against and pinches the urethra. Leading to thickening of the bladder wall.

Eventually, the bladder may weaken and lose the ability to empty completely, leaving some urine in the bladder. The narrowing of the urethra and urinary retention—the inability to empty the bladder completely—cause many of the problems associated with benign prostatic hyperplasia.

This condition is usually treated with medication and/or surgery.

PROSTATE CANCER

Prostate cancer, also known as carcinoma of the prostate, is the development of cancer in the prostate gland. Most prostate cancers are slow growing; however, some grow relatively fast. The cancer cells may spread from the prostate to other parts of the body, particularly the bones and lymph nodes.

It may initially cause no symptoms. In later stages it can cause difficulty urinating, blood in the urine, or pain in the pelvis or back when urinating. Other late symptoms may include feeling tired due to low levels of red blood cells and symptoms of disease due to cancer in other parts of the body.

Treatment may include a combination of surgery, radiation therapy, hormone therapy or chemotherapy.

When it only occurs inside the prostate it may be curable. In those in whom the disease has spread to the bones, pain medications, bisphosphonates and targeted therapy, among others may be useful.

Outcomes depend on a person's age and other health problems as well as how aggressive and extensive the cancer is.

WHAT IS THE PROSTATE?

The prostate is a gland found in men located between the bladder and the penis. The prostate is just in front of the rectum.

The urethra runs through the centre of the prostate, from the bladder to the penis, letting urine flow out of the body. The prostate secretes fluid that nourishes and protects sperm.

TESTING FOR PROSTATE DISEASE

It is very important for men above the age of 40 years to have regular (usually once a year) examinations of the prostate.

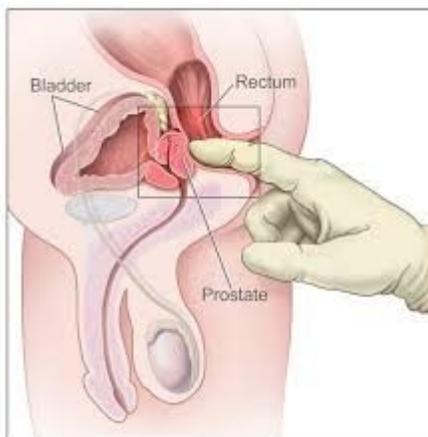
Regular examinations allow for early detection of prostate anomalies.

PROSTATITIS

This is the inflammation of the prostate gland usually caused by infection.

Patients with this condition have an acute urinary tract infection with increased urinary frequency and urgency, a need to urinate a lot at night, and have pain in the pelvis and genital area. They often have fever, chills, nausea, vomiting, and burning when urinating.

Acute bacterial prostatitis requires prompt treatment, as the condition can lead to bladder infections, abscesses in the prostate or, in extreme cases, completely blocked urine flow.



Left untreated, the condition can cause confusion and low blood pressure, and may be fatal. The condition is usually treated in the hospital with intravenous antibiotics, pain relievers, and fluids.



TESTS ON THE PROSTATE GLAND

There are 4 main ways of testing the [prostate for disease

1. **Direct Rectal Examination (DRE):** This is the physical examination of the gland, performed by a medical professional in which the prostate is felt to detect size, lumps or nodules or pain.
2. **Prostate-specific-antigen (PSA):** This is a blood test to check the levels of the protein produced by the prostate. High levels of this protein are usually an indication of cancer.
3. **Ultrasound (Transrectal):** This is usually performed to determine the extent of any damage that may not be detectable by physical examination.
4. **Biopsy:** In the case of prostate enlargement or lumps a biopsy is may be performed to rule out or confirm a diagnosis of prostate disease.

Most people with prostate cancer do not end up dying from the disease. The five year survival rate in the United States is 99%.

Globally it is the second most common type of cancer and the fifth leading cause of cancer-related death in men.

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