

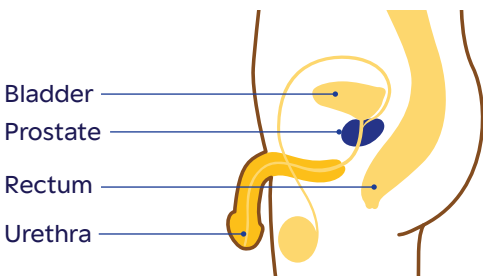
Prostate Cancer

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.

It can help to know where your prostate is if you're checking for symptoms. 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.



How common is prostate cancer?

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

Some facts about prostate cancer

- ▶ Prostate cancer is a common cancer, but most men who get it 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, your medical team will monitor the cancer closely.

We use the terms 'man/men' in places in this leaflet, but we understand that not everyone who has a prostate identifies as a man. It doesn't matter who you are or where you come from, we are here for you.

What increases my risk of prostate cancer?

The most common risk factors for prostate cancer include:



Age

As you grow older, your risk of prostate cancer increases. Prostate cancer mainly affects those over the age of 50.



Family history

Your risk is higher if your brother or father had prostate cancer. It is also higher if your relative developed prostate cancer at a younger age, or if you have more than one relative with the disease. Some inherited faulty genes can increase your risk of prostate cancer. Men with BRCA2 are twice as likely to develop prostate cancer.



Ethnic group

Black men are more likely to get prostate cancer than other men. 1 in 4 Black men will get prostate cancer in their lifetime compared to 1 in 8 for men from other ethnicities. The risk is lower for Asian men. The reasons for this are not yet fully understood.

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.

What are the symptoms of prostate cancer?

Many men with early prostate cancer have no symptoms at all. Others may have problems with peeing like:

- ▶ Peeing more often, especially at night.
- ▶ Trouble peeing, or a weaker flow.
- ▶ Feeling you have not completely emptied your bladder.
- ▶ Straining to empty your bladder.

Less common symptoms

- ▶ Blood in your pee or semen.
- ▶ Back pain or bone pain.
- ▶ Weight loss.
- ▶ Feeling tired all the time.

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 to be treated successfully.

How is prostate cancer diagnosed?

If your GP thinks your symptoms need to be looked at, you will have more tests. Tests that can help to diagnose prostate cancer include those below.

▶ **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**

This test measures how much PSA (prostate specific antigen) you have in your blood. A raised PSA level can be caused by cancer, but it can also be raised for other reasons. If your PSA is raised, you may also need a biopsy. The biopsy will show if you have prostate cancer or not.

▶ **Biopsy**

When you go for a prostate 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 developing prostate cancer that spreads.



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 like rashers, sausages and packet hams, and limit red meat.



Be physically active

Aim for at least 30 minutes of moderate physical activity a day.



Can I be screened for prostate cancer?

There is no prostate cancer screening programme in Ireland at present. Once you reach age 50 (or 40 if you have a family history of prostate cancer), talk to your GP (family doctor) about having your prostate checked.

Your GP will help you decide if you should have your prostate checked. This is called 'shared decision making'. It is your choice whether or not you have your prostate checked. If you decide you want to be checked, your GP may offer you a PSA blood test and a Digital Rectal Examination.

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

If you are diagnosed with prostate cancer, you can find more information in our booklet, Understanding prostate cancer.



Contact us for more information or support

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



Call our Support Line on Freephone 1800 200 700.



Email supportline@irishcancer.ie

We will provide you with confidential advice, support and information.



Ask about a call in your language.

Visit our **Daffodil Centres**, where our nurses can give you advice about early detection and cancer prevention. To find out where your local Daffodil Centre is, email **daffodilcentreinfo@irishcancer.ie**

Visit our website **www.cancer.ie** for more information on prostate cancer and ways you can reduce your risk of cancer.

