

NEWLY DIAGNOSED

If you or a loved one has recently been diagnosed with prostate cancer, it can be overwhelming and frightening. You may have questions about the disease and what that means.

Prostate cancer is usually a very slow growing disease and once diagnosed there is time to gather information, consider your options, and make a plan. More than 50 percent of men newly diagnosed with prostate cancer have low-risk disease which will likely not spread beyond the prostate to cause harm, problems, or symptoms. However, some prostate cancers are aggressive and will spread beyond the prostate to other parts of the body.

Understanding the Prostate and Prostate Cancer

The prostate is a walnut-shaped gland located below the bladder, behind the base of the penis, and in front of the rectum. It surrounds the upper part of the urethra, which is the tube that carries urine from the bladder.

The prostate makes seminal fluid which protects, supports, and helps transport sperm.

Prostate cancer is a disease in which normal cells in a man's prostate gland change and grows uncontrollably to form a tumour. Prostate cancer is the most common type of cancer diagnosed in Australian men.

What to Know About Your Prostate Cancer

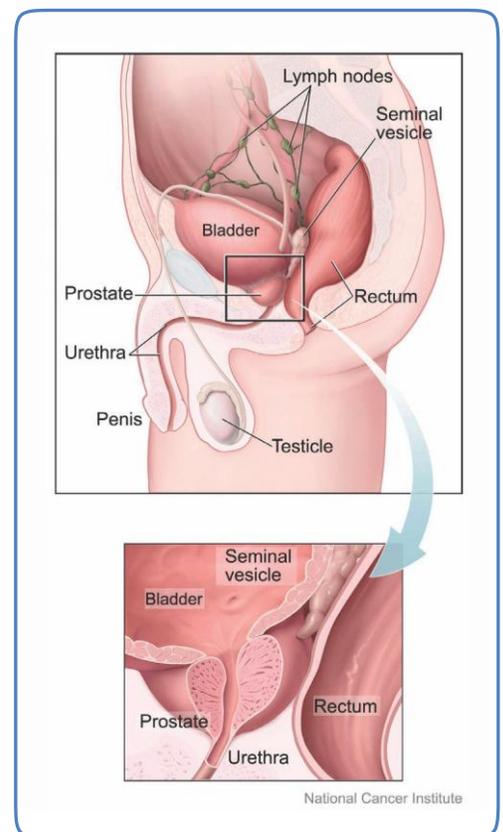
Now that your doctor has confirmed that you have prostate cancer, several other tests and procedures can be used to determine more about the location and/or severity of the disease. Tests may include MRI, PET, CT scans, ultrasounds, and others. These and other tests help physicians have a clearer picture of your disease so the best course of treatment can be recommended for you.

Stage – Staging prostate cancer determines if and how far the prostate cancer has spread beyond the prostate. There are four stages of prostate cancer: I through to IV.

Grade/Gleason Score – The Gleason score indicates how likely it is that the tumour will spread. Today almost all men have a Gleason score of 6 or above.

Risk Group – The risk group provides information about how likely it is that the cancer will come back (if it is early stage) or progress.

There are several new, genomic tests available that go beyond the standard risk-assessment done with the PSA and Gleason score. These tests help to predict if the cancer will spread beyond the prostate, if it is aggressive, or how likely it is to return. Talk to your doctor to find out if you are a candidate for one of these tests before making a treatment decision.



Choosing Your Treatment Team

Choosing your doctor and health care team is an important and very personal decision. Prostate cancer is a disease that can be treated by several different types of medical specialists. And the treatment that you choose may mean that the doctor who diagnosed your cancer is not the one doing the majority of your treatment. You may meet with many doctors before you make a final decision about treatment.

Consider a multi-disciplinary team. A multi-disciplinary team is a group of health care professionals from different specialties working together to suggest a treatment plan based on your diagnosis, personal health, and preferences. If you cannot work with a multi-disciplinary team, meeting with a medical oncologist will help you to have a full picture of all treatment options available to you. This is especially important should your cancer return at some point in the future.

QUESTIONS FOR THE DOC



- What is the stage and grade of my prostate cancer?
- What other tests will be done?
- What are my treatment options?
- What are the potential side effects of each treatment you recommend and
- How can these side effects be managed

Specialists involved in the treatment of prostate cancer include:

Physicians

- Urologist
- Radiation Oncologist
- Medical Oncologist
- Primary Care Physician

Other Health Care Professionals

- Physical Therapist
- Nutritionist
- Prostate Cancer Care Nurse
- Men's Health Specialist

Prostate Cancer Treatment

The treatment of prostate cancer depends on many factors including the size and location of the tumour, the aggressiveness of the tumour, whether the cancer has spread, and your overall health. Treatment is also a very personal decision and what is right for one man may not be right for another. There are many treatment options for men with prostate cancer today. Learn about the treatment options that are available to you, ask many questions, and then consider what you want for yourself and your life.

Living with Prostate Cancer

Feeling frightened, isolated, or angry is normal and common reactions to learning you or someone you love has been diagnosed with cancer. Support exists to help you with all aspects of the journey, don't be afraid to ask for help along the way. Take advantage of financial assistance, survivors, support groups, educational programs, and other resources, many free of charge.