



The Trinidad and Tobago Cancer Society

Prostate Cancer

Early Detection & Treatment Guidelines



www.cancertt.com

What is Prostate Cancer?

Prostate cancer is a malignant (cancerous) tumor growth that is comprised of cells of the prostate gland. The tumor normally grows slowly and remains confined to the gland for many years. As the cancer advances, however, it can spread beyond the prostate into the surrounding tissues (local spread). Moreover, the cancer also can metastasize (spread even further) to other areas of the body such as bones, lungs and liver.

Why is it Important to be Informed About Prostate Cancer?

Prostate cancer is the most common cancer in men and the second leading cause of deaths from cancer. Most experts in this field, therefore, recommend that beginning at age 40, all men should undergo yearly screening for prostate cancer in order to give the best chance of detecting prostate cancer at an early stage.

What Causes Prostate Cancer?

The cause of prostate cancer is unknown; however, the following risk (predisposing) factors that have been associated with prostate cancer include:

- Advancing age *
- Genetics (heredity)
- Hormonal influences **
- Cigarette smoking
- Diets that are high in saturated fat
- And such environmental factors as toxins, chemicals, and industrial products

- ★ The chance of developing prostate cancer increase with age. As a matter of fact, some studies have suggested that among men over 80, between 50% and 80% of them may have prostate cancer.
- ★★ Testosterone, the male hormone, directly stimulates the growth of both normal prostate tissue and prostate cancer cells. Therefore, this hormone is thought to be involved in the development and growth of prostate cancer.

What Are The Symptoms Of Prostate Cancer?

In the earliest stages of the disease most men will not experience any symptoms. However as the tumor develops the following symptoms could indicate its presence:

- A need to urinate frequently, specially at night
- Difficulty starting urination or holding back urine
- Weak, or interrupted flow of urine
- Painful or burning urination
- Difficulty in having an erection
- Painful ejaculation during intercourse
- Blood in urine or semen
- Frequent pain or stiffness in the lower back, hips, or upper thighs

What Are The Screening Tests For Prostate Cancer?

Prostate cancer usually is suspected initially because of abnormal results of one or both of the screening tests that are used to detect prostate cancer. These screening tests are a digital rectal examination (DRE), and a blood test called the prostate specific antigen (PSA).

- During the digital rectal examination, the doctor examines (palpates) the prostate gland with his gloved index finger inserted through the anus to detect abnormalities in the gland.
- If the result of the digital rectal examination raises suspicion of the presence of prostate cancer, than a PSA test is recommended.

How is Prostate Cancer Diagnosed?

Once there is a suspicion of prostate cancer from the DRE or the PSA, the following additional tests may be done to confirm the diagnosis:

- Urinalysis may show blood in the urine.
- Urine or prostatic fluid cytology may reveal abnormal cells.
- Prostate biopsy provides definitive diagnostic confirmation of prostate cancer.
- CT scans, bone scan and/or chest x-ray may be done to see if the cancer has spread to other organs and the extent of the spread.

How is Prostate Cancer Treated?

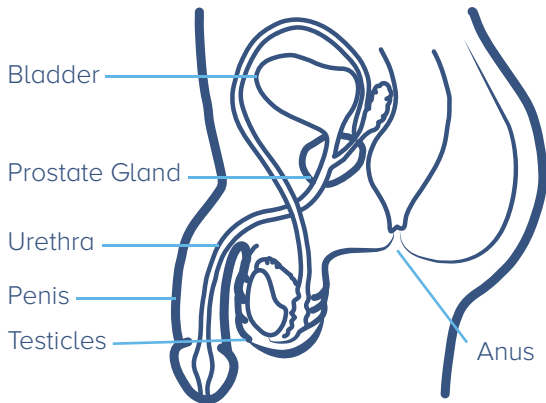
The treatment options for prostate cancer vary based on the stage of the tumor. In the early stages, surgery and radiation therapy may be used to remove or kill the tumor.

Prostate cancer that has spread may be treated with drugs to reduce testosterone levels, surgery to remove the testes, or chemotherapy.

Surgery, radiation therapy and hormonal therapy can all interfere with sexual desire or sexual performance on either a temporary or permanent basis. These types of concerns should be discussed with a health care provider.

Here Are Some Relevant Questions You May Want To Raise With Your Doctor

- Is my PSA necessary every year?
- When can I stop checking for prostate cancer?
- Should all prostate cancers be treated?



The Trinidad and Tobago Cancer Society recommends that you always consult your healthcare provider.

This publication was made possible by your donation
to The Trinidad and Tobago Cancer Society



Become a Member
800 TTCS (8827)



#69 Dundonald Street, Port of Spain, Trinidad, W.I.
Tel: (868) 226-1221 Fax: (868) 625-8497 E-Mail: projects@cancer.tt