

Prostate Cancer

Prostate cancer occurs when cells in the prostate grow and multiply uncontrollably, damaging surrounding tissue and interfering with the normal functioning of the prostate. The cells can spread to other parts of the body. When the disease spreads, it is still called prostate cancer.

Your best chance for surviving prostate cancer is detecting it early. When prostate cancer is found early, there is nearly a 100 percent chance for cure.

Symptoms

Prostate cancer often has no symptoms in its earliest stages. Symptoms vary from man to man and may include:

- frequent urination
- difficulty when starting to urinate or trying to hold it back
- not being able to urinate
- weak or interrupted urine flow
- painful or burning urination
- blood in the urine
- difficulty in having an erection
- blood in the semen
- frequent pain or stiffness in the lower back, hips or upper thighs

Having any these symptoms does not mean you have cancer, but if you notice one or more of them for more than two weeks, see your doctor.

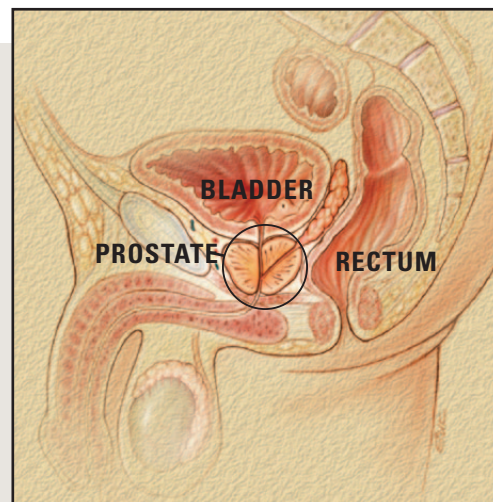
Risk Factors

Many factors may influence the development of prostate cancer, including:

- **age** Men 50 or older are at the greatest risk. Age is the most influential risk factor.
- **family history** Your risk is higher with a family history (especially father, brother, son) of prostate cancer.
- **race** African Americans have nearly twice the prostate cancer incidence of white men. It is less common among Asian or American Indian men.
- **diet** A high-fat diet, particularly animal fats, may increase your risk. Diets high in fruits and vegetables are thought to decrease your risk.



Wesley Garrett is a walking testimonial to the value of routine screening for prostate cancer with the prostate-specific antigen (PSA) blood test. When he's not building oilfield equipment and repairing electric motors, he enjoys fishing and family outings.



The prostate, a gland in the male reproductive system, is located just below the bladder. It surrounds part of the urethra, which empties the bladder, and produces a fluid that forms part of the semen.

The Best of Prostate Health

Know Your Risks

MD Anderson has specific cancer screening schedules for men and women, based on their chances of getting cancer. The exam you get and how often you are tested depends on whether you are at average or increased risk for cancer.

People at increased risk have a higher chance of getting cancer than men and women at average risk. Those at increased risk may need to get additional tests, start screening at an earlier age or have exams more frequently.

It's important to know if people in your family have had cancer. This information, along with your personal health history, helps your doctor find out if you're at increased risk. You and your doctor can use this information to make a well-informed decision about cancer screening.

MD Anderson's screening guidelines for men at average risk for prostate cancer are listed below. For MD Anderson screening guidelines for men at increased risk, visit www.mdanderson.org/screeningguidelines.

Screening

Prostate screening is not appropriate for all men. Beginning at age 40, men should speak with their health care provider about the benefits and limitations of prostate screening. A health care provider can help you determine if prostate screening is right for you and at what age to begin screening.

For most men, annual prostate screening should begin at age 50.

MD Anderson recommends:

Digital Rectal Exam: The physician inserts a lubricated, gloved finger into the rectum to feel if the prostate gland is enlarged.

Prostate Specific Antigen (PSA) Test: This is a simple blood test.

Because prostate cancer is a slow-growing cancer, specialists advise that screening exams are not recommended for men whose life expectancy is 10 years or less. A PSA blood test also is not necessary in men age 75 or older who have a normal digital rectal exam and no symptoms of prostate cancer.

Reducing Your Risk

You can take action to reduce your risk of developing prostate cancer. Making the healthy changes below does not mean you will not get prostate cancer, but it may lower your chances.

- eat at least five servings of fruits and vegetables per day
- follow recommended screening guidelines
- exercise regularly
- maintain your ideal weight

Take the time to discuss your own risks with your health care provider who can best advise you on the screening exams and risk-reduction strategies that are right for you.



Vincent Buckley believes physical activity helped him survive three separate battles with prostate cancer. Now, he's running hard to enjoy life.

MD Anderson Resources

The Cancer Prevention Center can help you understand your risk of developing cancer through risk assessment and, when appropriate, genetic testing. The center offers personalized risk-reduction strategies, including healthy lifestyle recommendations and the use of medications to reduce cancer risk. Specialists perform risk-based cancer screening exams based on age, gender and cancer risk factors.

MD Anderson provides cancer care services at five convenient locations in the greater Houston area: Bay Area, Katy, Texas Medical Center, Sugar Land and The Woodlands.

For more information about MD Anderson programs or services, or to make an appointment, contact askMDAnderson at 1-877-632-6789 and ask for Carla, or visit www.mdanderson.org/ask.

Want to learn how you can prevent cancer?

Get a personalized action plan by completing MD Anderson's Cancer Risk Check at www.mdanderson.org/riskcheck.

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**MD Anderson
Cancer Center**

Making Cancer History®

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