



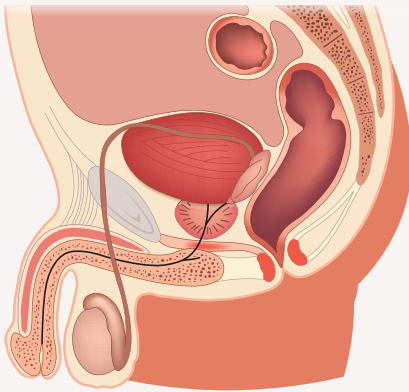
# Prostate Cancer Screening

# Prostate Cancer

...get the facts right

You may have heard of prostate cancer or even know someone suffering from it. This booklet provides some simple facts about prostate cancer that every man should be aware of.

## What is prostate cancer?



The prostate gland is a walnut-shaped gland that lies below the bladder in men. Cancer in the prostate is the result of abnormal growth which may go on to invade surrounding or distant organs.

## Facts about prostate cancer...

**Is it common?**

**Yes!** Prostate cancer is the 3rd most common cancer in Singaporean men and the risk increases with age. Death from prostate cancer is less common as only some cases will progress to advanced disease. For an average healthy man, the risk of dying from prostate cancer is around 3%.

**Is prostate cancer related to benign prostatic hypertrophy (BPH)?**

**No!** Prostate cancer is a different disease from benign prostatic hypertrophy (BPH).

In BPH, growth of the prostate can affect urine flow but cannot spread to other organs and does not affect lifespan.

## Is Prostate Cancer a dangerous disease?

**It can be.** If you suffer from a fast-growing prostate cancer, the cancer can grow and spread beyond the prostate gland to other organs. Cancer that has spread this way is called **metastatic prostate cancer**.

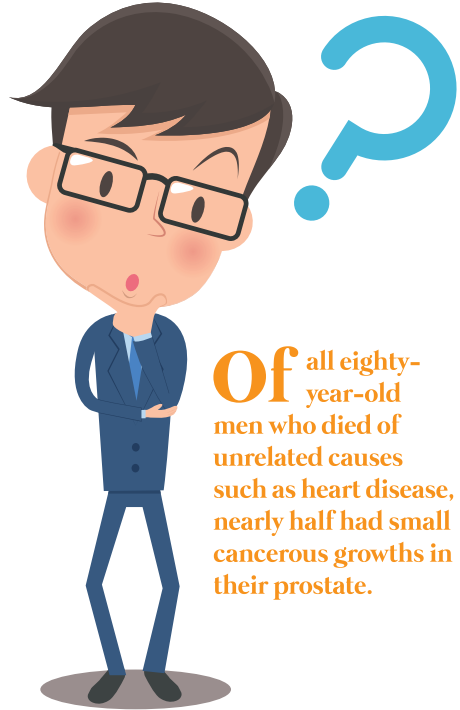
### **But not always.**

Many prostate cancers are slow-growing tumours that will remain limited to the prostate gland and have no effect on lifespan. Slow-growing tumours will need close monitoring and may not need treatment.

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## Is Prostate Cancer treatable?

**Yes!** There are many treatments for fast-growing prostate cancer. However, once it has spread beyond the prostate, treatments can control symptoms and reduce further spreading but less likely for a complete cure.



## Does Prostate Cancer have any symptoms?

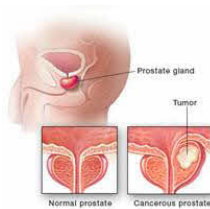
**Not always!** Prostate cancer may produce no symptoms at all in early stages. Once the cancer has spread, it can cause serious symptoms.

**DIAGNOSIS** at early stages through screening may detect the disease when it is still curable.

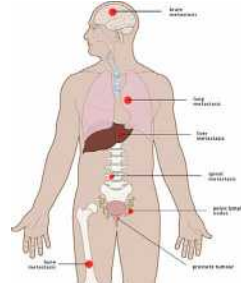
# Prostate cancer at different stages

## Stage at Diagnosis

### Early prostate cancer



### Advanced prostate cancer



## Symptoms

- Usually none
- May have urinary symptoms

- Difficulty urinating
- Blood in the urine or semen
- Pain from cancer spreading to the bone
- Tiredness
- Loss of weight

## Treatment

- Slow-growing cancers may need monitoring only
- Fast-growing cancers may be cured by removing the prostate or by radiation therapy to the prostate

- Cancer has spread beyond the prostate and cannot be cured
- Surgery to remove the testes or medicines that block male hormones can slow the growth of prostate cancer
- Very advanced prostate cancer may need chemotherapy or radiation therapy

## Outcomes

- 90% of the patients survive more than 15 years
- With treatment, the chance of cancer spread is low

- 40% of the patients survive more than 5 years

In Singapore, one in four men with prostate cancer have advanced disease when diagnosed.

Early diagnosis with screening can reduce this number by half.



## The PSA TEST... should you take it?

### What is the PSA test ?

The PSA test is a blood test that measures levels of prostate-specific antigens (PSA) and is used for the screening of prostate cancer. Men with prostate cancer usually have a higher PSA level.



### Does a high PSA test result mean you have prostate cancer?

Not always! Many other conditions of the prostate that are not cancerous can also increase PSA levels such as BPH and infection. If PSA is high, a biopsy test may be required to determine if there is prostate cancer.

### What is involved in a prostate biopsy?

During a prostate biopsy, a fine needle is used to remove small samples from the prostate gland and then examined for cancer. There are risks of complications such as pain, blood in the urine, infection and temporary difficulty in passing urine.

### What is the benefit of PSA testing?

For men who develop fast-growing prostate cancer, PSA testing allows diagnosis at an earlier stage where the cancer is still limited to the prostate. Early diagnosis reduces the chance of cancer spreading to other parts of the body and death.



What can I expect if I take the PSA test?

## PSA BLOOD TEST *Step 1*

**80%**

of men tested have a **NORMAL** PSA level

No need for prostate biopsy as risk of having prostate cancer is low. Re-testing can be considered in 3-5 years.

**20%**

of men tested have a **HIGH** PSA level

A prostate biopsy is usually recommended. The PSA test may be repeated before deciding for biopsy.

## PROSTATE BIOPSY *Step 2*

**25%**

chance that the biopsy will find cancer.

**75%**

chance that there is no cancer. Some cancers may be missed on biopsy so further monitoring of PSA levels may be required. Some men may need more than one biopsy.

**0.5%**

chance of serious complications from the biopsy requiring hospitalisation.

## DIAGNOSIS of PROSTATE CANCER

**1** out of **12** MEN

screened will be diagnosed with

**PROSTATE CANCER.**

Not all prostate cancers need treatment, some may require monitoring only.

If treatment is required, early diagnosis through PSA testing and monitoring can mean:

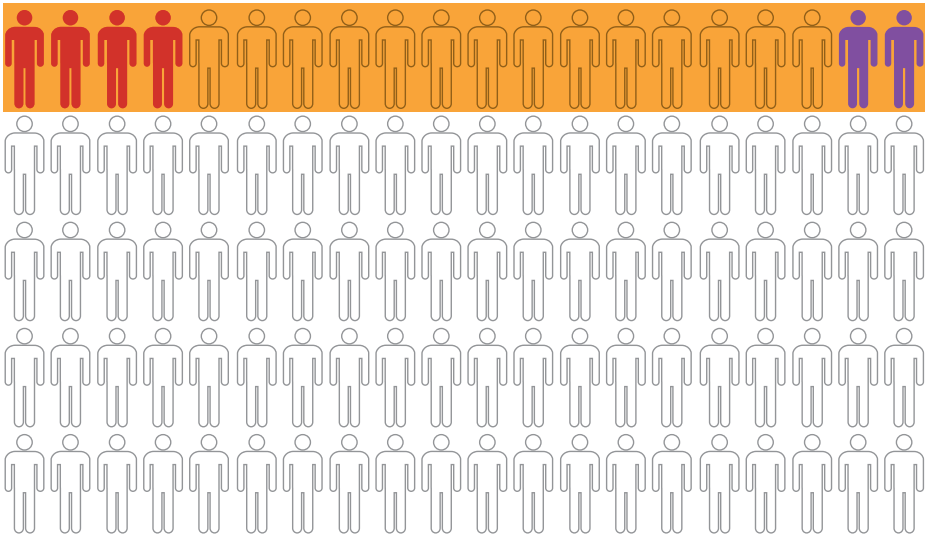
**50%**

Reduction in risk of the prostate cancer **SPREADING.**

**20%**

Reduction in risk of **DEATH** from prostate cancer.

# The pros and cons of PSA test



Every man tested  
for PSA levels



Prostate cancer



Side effect such  
as bleeding or  
infection



High PSA levels

The majority of men found to have high PSA levels may become anxious after being tested. These men may then undergo a biopsy, only to find out that they do not have cancer.

Many cancers diagnosed through PSA testing are slow-growing and therefore will only require monitoring, which may be stressful for some men.

With reference to the diagram above, out of every hundred men

screened with PSA testing, twenty men will have a high PSA level and need a biopsy. Out of these twenty men, two men may have complications such as infection and bleeding, and four men will have prostate cancer in which some of whom will need treatment.

For every eight hundred men who receive PSA testing, we can save one man who would have died from prostate cancer if it was not detected early.

# National University Hospital



Nearest MRT Station: Kent Ridge (Circle Line)

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## Contact us

**Urology Centre**  
**NUH Medical Centre, Level 16**

Appointment Line: (65) 6908 2222  
Email: [urology\\_centre@nuhs.edu.sg](mailto:urology_centre@nuhs.edu.sg)

Opening Hours  
Monday to Friday: 8:30am - 5:00pm  
Closed on Sat, Sun & Public Holidays

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### National University Hospital

5 Lower Kent Ridge Road  
Singapore 119074  
Tel: (65) 6908 2222  
Website: [www.nuh.com.sg](http://www.nuh.com.sg)

Company Registration No.  
198500843R