

Prostate Cancer and Men... Just the Facts

Prostate cancer is one of the leading nonskin cancers diagnosed among men in the United States. Each year about 186,000 men will be diagnosed with this disease (National Cancer Institute).

Prostate cancer is a cancer in which cells grow and multiply uncontrollably in the prostate. It may damage the surrounding tissues and disrupt the normal functioning of the prostate itself. The prostate is a male reproductive organ that is located in front of the rectum and under the bladder. A normal prostate is about the size of a walnut. Health-care professionals conduct a digital rectal exam to determine the size of the prostate as part of the screening for prostate cancer.

Prostate cancer generally occurs in older men and is a slow-growing cancer; it takes a long time before it damages surrounding tissues. Detecting it early can give nearly a 100 percent cure rate.

Several factors increase a man's chance of having prostate cancer:

- **Age:** Men age 50 and older are at greater risk. A Prostate Specific Antigen (PSA) test is initially done at this age as a screening tool.
- **Family history:** Your risk is higher with a family history of prostate cancer. For this reason, men with a family history of prostate cancer should be screened starting at age 45 rather than 50.
- **Race:** Prostate cancer is more common among black men than white or Hispanic/Latino men. It is even less common among Asian and Native American men.
- **Diet:** Diets high in fat, particularly animal fat, have been implicated in prostate cancer; whereas an increase in dietary fruits and vegetables has been linked to a decrease in the risk of prostate cancer (Kampel, 2007).

For more information on prostate cancer, visit the National Cancer Institute site at <http://www.cancer.gov/cancertopics/wyntk/prostate>.

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Reference:
Lewis J. Kampel, Dx/Rx: Prostate Cancer, 2007