

## Preventive exams: Take care of your Prostate



The prostate is a gland of the male reproductive system. It is located just below the bladder and its function is to produce the liquid that is part of semen. Preventive exams aim to detect whether there are any suspicious signs or indicators of prostate cancer before any symptoms occur or may spread to other organs. If the cancer is detected early, there are more chances of survival.

### What are the tests that detect prostate cancer?

#### Prostate-specific antigen (PSA) test

Prostate-specific antigen is a protein made by cells produced by the prostate. This protein is found in semen and blood. To find out the PSA level, a blood test is done. A high level of PSA in your blood suggests that you are more likely to have prostate cancer. However, because this test is not a specific test for cancer, it is possible that the PSA level is high due to other factors such as:

- Having an enlarged prostate (benign prostatic hyperplasia)
- Having other common prostate problems
- Taking certain medications

If the PSA level is high, other tests are needed to detect prostate cancer with certainty.

#### Special PSA tests

- **Free PSA percentage:** it is the ratio of the amount of PSA that circulates freely in the blood, compared to that which remains attached to blood proteins. A low percentage of free PSA means that there is a greater chance of having prostate cancer. You will probably need a biopsy to have a more certain diagnosis.
- **Complex PSA:** this test directly measures the amount of PSA that is attached to other proteins, meaning the portion of PSA that is not free.
- **Tests that combine different types of PSA:** some newer tests combine the results of different types of PSA to get an overall score. These tests include: the Prostate Health Index (PHI) and the 4Kscore test.
- **PSA density:** through a transrectal ultrasound, the doctor can measure the size of the prostate and compare the results with the PSA levels. A high PSA density indicates a higher probability of cancer. This test is also used to try to correct PSA variations due to an enlarged prostate.

#### Digital Rectal Exam (DRE)

In this test, the doctor inserts a finger (wearing gloves and lubrication) into the rectum to feel the back of the prostate for inflammation, lumps, or firm areas, which could be an indicator of cancer. This test may be uncomfortable, but it is usually painless and takes a short time.

#### Prostate Biopsy

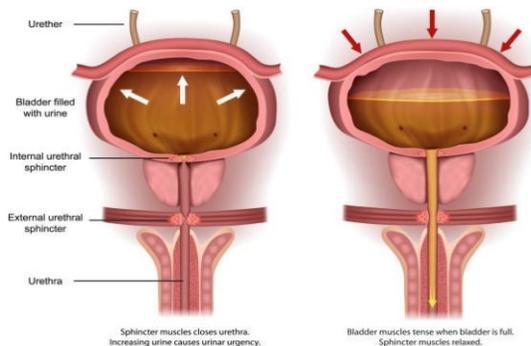
Biopsy is the only way to diagnose prostate cancer. It is a procedure in which the doctor removes tissue from the prostate so that it can be studied under a microscope to identify cancer cells.

### Risk factor's Prostate cancer

<p><b>Age</b></p> <p>The chance of getting prostate cancer increases after age 50.</p>
<p><b>Race</b></p> <p>Black men have a higher risk of developing prostate cancer.</p>
<p><b>Family background</b></p> <p>The risk of prostate cancer is increased if a close family member was diagnosed with prostate cancer before the age of 65.</p>
<p><b>Inherited gene mutations</b></p> <p>BRCA1 and BRCA2 are mutations associated with the risk of prostate cancer. It is only recommended if there is a strong family history of cancer.</p>
<p><b>Nutrition</b></p> <p>Having a diet based on animal fats and few fruits and vegetables can increase the risk of prostate cancer.</p>

### Prostate Cancer Screening Benefits

- Early detection, preventing the spread of cancer to other organs.
- Less invasive treatment that can reduce side effects such as:
  - Erectile dysfunction
  - Urinary incontinence



### Recommendation of medical specialists

It is recommended that men of age 50 and older discuss the pros and cons of early detection of prostate cancer with their doctor. The discussion should include a review your risk factors and your preferences for the most recommended screening tests for you.

If you have a family history or other risk factors associate with prostate cancer, consider getting screened before age 50.

### Social and Emotional Aspect

For tips, tools, and resources on how you and your family can deal with emotional and physical concerns that occur during and after your medical treatment, please visit your primary care physician or contact the following phone lines:

#### Medical Advice Line

1-844-347-7801

TTY/TDD 1-844-347-7804

#### APS Healthcare

787-641-9133

### References:

<https://www.cancer.org/es/cancer/cancer-de-prostata/deteccion-diagnostico-clasificacion-por-etapas/pruebas-de-deteccion-para-el-cancer-de-prostata.html>  
 (2022)<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/prostatecancerscreening.html>

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