



Is prostate cancer screening right for you?

DECISION GUIDE

- ▶ **Start completing this guide now!**
- ▶ **Review each step on pages 1, 2, and 3.**
- ▶ **Bring this guide to your visit.**

STEP 1: WHAT IS INVOLVED IN PROSTATE CANCER SCREENING?

- **A discussion** – Discussion of screening for prostate cancer is recommended for men ages 55 to 69 years, and sometimes at younger or older ages based on individual circumstances.
- **The PSA blood test** – The blood test is known as a 'PSA test' because it measures the level of prostate-specific antigen (PSA) in the blood. PSA is a protein made by the prostate gland and also by most prostate cancers.
- **Digital rectal exam** – Sometimes screening may also include a rectal examination by a physician using a finger.

STEP 2: WHAT ARE THE POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF SCREENING?

- **Finding out early** – Finding cancer early may help reduce symptoms, make treatment easier, or prevent death from prostate cancer.
- **A chance to watch it closely** – Most prostate cancers found by screening are considered lower risk and can be managed without surgery, radiation, or chemotherapy. These cases may require regular monitoring with blood tests, x-rays, follow-up appointments and potentially prostate biopsies.
- **Understanding your chances** – Knowing your PSA level, your race/ethnicity, and your family history can help a provider determine your risk for prostate cancer.
- **Maybe getting good results** – A very low PSA level can be reassuring.

STEP 3: WHAT ARE THE POTENTIAL HARMS (RISKS) OF SCREENING?

- **Treatment that may not be needed** – Testing may lead to a diagnosis of a prostate cancer that is not likely to harm you or kill you. Sometimes men have surgery or radiation that is unnecessary.
- **Anxiety** – Waiting for results and receiving results can be stressful for you and your family.
- **Uncertainty** – A high PSA level may not be caused by prostate cancer and a low PSA level can be reassuring even though prostate cancer may still be possible. Only additional testing can diagnose cancer.
- **The possibility of more testing** – Screening results can lead to more testing and lost work days. Testing can cost money and may have some risks, including hospitalization.
- **Complications of treatment** – Treating prostate cancer found through screening may lead to erectile dysfunction or urine leakage. In this way, the treatment of some prostate cancers may cause more health problems for you than the cancer would have if left alone.

STEP 4: WHAT IS YOUR RISK FOR PROSTATE CANCER?

THINGS THAT CAN INCREASE YOUR CHANCES OF DEVELOPING PROSTATE CANCER

Check and answer EACH that applies to you.

- ☐ Being 55 years or older
(write in your current age):
- ☐ Being African American
- ☐ Having a family history of prostate cancer
 - ☐ Father (biological) and his age when cancer was found:
 - ☐ Brother or brothers and age(s) when cancer was found:
 - ☐ Other family member and age when cancer was found:

PATIENT
NAME

DATE OF
BIRTH

SCREENING HISTORY

Check ONE and provide details about your test results.

- ☐ I have never been screened before
- ☐ Not sure if I've ever been screened before
- ☐ I was screened before with the PSA test
 - ☐ Normal PSA level
 - ☐ PSA level out of range
 - ☐ I don't remember what my result was

COMMON SYMPTOMS

Men with prostate cancer often have no symptoms.
Do you have any of the following symptoms?

- ☐ Having to urinate (pee) more often, or with pain
- ☐ A weaker stream of urine
- ☐ The feeling that you need to urinate right away
- ☐ Having to wake up more often to urinate
- ☐ Difficult, reduced or painful ejaculation
- ☐ Pain or stiffness in your lower back, hips or pelvis

STEP 5: HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT SCREENING?

POTENTIAL BENEFITS

How important to you are each of the potential benefits?

- Finding prostate cancer early when it could be easier to treat
- Understanding your risk for prostate cancer
- Receiving test results showing a normal PSA level

NOT IMPORTANT	A LITTLE IMPORTANT	SOMEWHAT IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	EXTREMELY IMPORTANT
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

POTENTIAL HARMS

How concerned are you about each of the potential harms?

- Receiving treatment for a cancer that may never have caused any symptoms or harm
- Having follow-up testing recommended if your PSA results show there MAY be a problem
- Being told you have prostate cancer that may not need treatment, but will need regular testing

NOT CONCERNED	A LITTLE CONCERNED	SOMEWHAT CONCERNED	VERY CONCERNED	EXTREMELY CONCERNED
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

STEP 6: DO YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS FOR YOUR PROVIDER?

- Have you considered your family's and significant other's opinions about screening?
- What are the next steps if PSA test results show there MAY be a problem?
- If you find prostate cancer, what are the different ways you can treat it?
And, what side effects could there be?

Write down any other questions you want to ask during your visit.

► STOP HERE!

► Bring this guide to your visit.

FINAL PAGE TO DISCUSS WITH YOUR PROVIDER AT VISIT

COMPLETE THIS PAGE WITH YOUR PROVIDER

DISCUSS SCREENING WITH YOUR PROVIDER

- Review all of your answers in this guide.
- Ask any questions you have about screening.

MAKE A DECISION ABOUT SCREENING

☐ **I WANT SCREENING**

- Get an order for a PSA blood test.
- Ask where to get tested.
- Schedule a follow-up visit to discuss the results. Date:

☐ **I DON'T WANT SCREENING AT THIS TIME**

- You can always reconsider this decision.

☐ **I NEED MORE TIME**

- You may want to discuss screening with your family and significant other.
- Schedule a follow-up visit to discuss again. Date:

Sign your name below to confirm that you discussed screening with your provider and you made your decision together.

PATIENT
SIGNATURE

DATE

PROVIDER
SIGNATURE

DATE

THINGS TO REMEMBER

- Tell a clinician if a family member is diagnosed with prostate cancer or you experience any symptoms.
- You can always change your mind about screening.