

# Prostate cancer

If prostate cancer is found and treated early, you have a good chance of getting better.

## What is prostate cancer?

- It develops from a cancerous growth in the prostate gland.
- All men have a prostate gland. It is about the size of a walnut, and sits below the bladder. It makes some of the fluid in semen.

## How will I know I have prostate cancer?

You can have prostate cancer without noticing anything is wrong. Warning signs may include:

- needing to pee often
- feeling pain or burning when peeing
- blood in the pee
- trouble getting an erection
- pain when ejaculating.

If you have any of these problems, see your doctor. You will have some tests to work out if you have prostate cancer. This will involve small pieces of tissue being removed, called a biopsy.

## What do the test results mean?

The test results will tell the doctor what type of prostate cancer you have, and if the cancer has spread (the stage). This information helps the doctors decide what treatment you need.

**Localised** – the cancer is small and is contained in the prostate gland

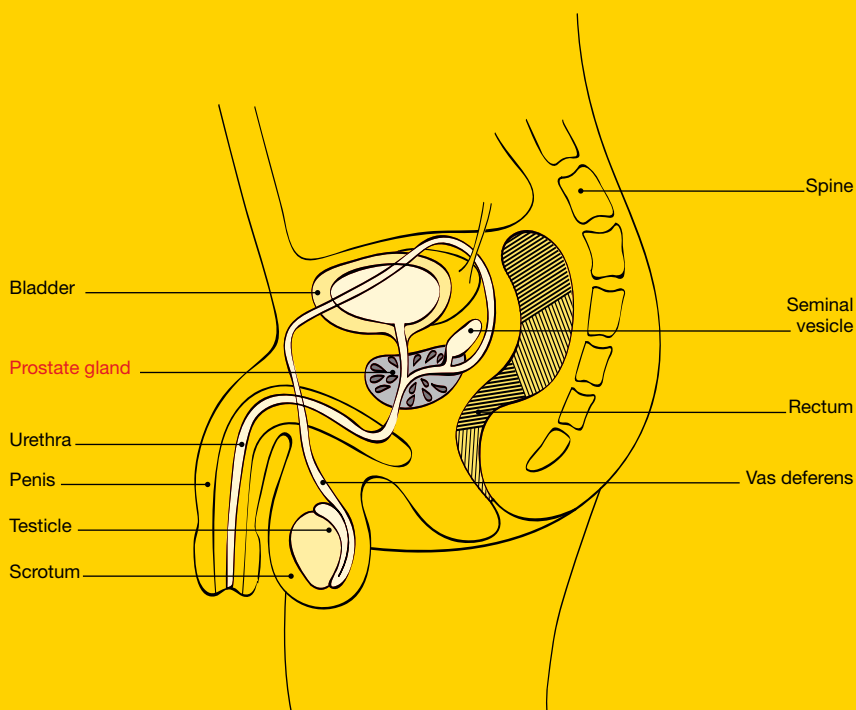
**Locally advanced** – the cancer is larger and has spread outside the prostate gland to the pelvic region

**Advanced** – the cancer has spread outside of the prostate gland to nearby organs or lymph nodes

**PROSTATE CANCER**

**The prostate**

The picture below shows where the prostate is in the body. The prostate is part of the male reproductive system. It sits below the bladder and in front of the rectum. It surrounds part of the tube that carries urine from the bladder (the urethra).



**Bladder**

This is where urine is kept.

**Prostate gland**

This makes some of the fluid in semen.

**Urethra**

A tube that takes urine from the bladder to the end of the penis.

**Penis**

A man's sex organ.

**Testicles**

Two small, egg-shaped glands that sit behind the penis in a pouch of skin called the scrotum. The testicles make sperm.

**Scrotum**

A pouch of skin. The scrotum hangs below the pipi (penis) and holds two small organs called testicles.

**PROSTATE CANCER**

**What treatment will I need?**

There are different types of treatment for prostate cancer. You may have one or more of these treatments:

- **Watchful waiting** – no treatment but you will see the doctor for regular tests to see if the cancer has grown
- **Active surveillance** – no treatment but you will see the doctor for regular biopsies to see if the cancer has grown
- **Surgery** – removes the prostate gland, called radical prostatectomy
- **Radiotherapy** – uses radiation to kill or injure the cancer cells
- **Brachytherapy** – seeds or needles containing radiation are placed within the prostate to kill the tumour
- **Hormone treatment (also called androgen deprivation therapy)** – injections or tablets that slow the production of the male hormone testosterone, which can make the cancer grow

**How will the treatment affect my body?**

Treatment for prostate cancer can cause problems. Some of the common ones include:

- **Trouble controlling peeing** – This is because the surgery sometimes damages the muscles around the prostate.
- **Trouble getting an erection** – The nerves that control an erection pass through the prostate. Sometimes the nerves are damaged during surgery, because of the position of the cancer.

**How do I manage the cancer?**

It is normal for you and your family to have lots of different feelings right now. Talking with your doctor, nurse or health care professional will help answer any questions you may have.

Depending on where you live, you might need to travel for treatment. You can get help to pay for travel and accommodation.

**For more information**

- Call Cancer Council 13 11 20
- Visit [www.cancercouncil.com.au](http://www.cancercouncil.com.au)
- Visit [www.menzies.edu.au/cancer](http://www.menzies.edu.au/cancer)
- For current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cancer-related statistics, see [www.aihw.gov.au](http://www.aihw.gov.au)

*This information has been adapted for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people by Menzies School of Health Research in consultation with a Clinical Advisory Group and an Indigenous Consultation group. Production by Cancer Council.*