



NC PROSTATE CANCER



What is prostate cancer?

Prostate cancer refers to cancer that starts in the prostate. Besides skin cancer, prostate cancer is the most common type of cancer in American men.¹ Nearly all prostate cancers are adenocarcinomas, meaning they develop from the gland cells. Prostate cancer tends to grow slowly. Most men with prostate cancer will die of other causes rather than prostate cancer.²

Risk Factors

These risk factors may increase your chances for developing prostate cancer.

- **Being Male.** Only men can get prostate cancer.
- **Age.** Prostate cancer is rare in men under 40 years old.
- **Race.** Prostate cancer is more common in Black men.
- **Family history of prostate cancer.** Having a father, brother or son that had prostate cancer increases your risk.³



Symptoms

Prostate cancer usually has no symptoms in the early stages. As the prostate cancer advances, some men might experience the following symptoms:

- difficulty urinating including problems starting urination, weak or interrupted flow, pain or burning during urination, or/and the need to urinate more often, especially at night,
- blood in the urine or semen,
- pain in the back, hips or pelvis that does not go away and/or painful ejaculation.⁴



Prostate Cancer in NC

Prostate cancer was the second leading cause of cancer deaths in North Carolina men in 2019 (1,032 deaths) and is the most common cancer in men. It is estimated that 8,055 males in North Carolina will be diagnosed with prostate cancer and 1,092 males will die from prostate cancer in 2021.⁵

Screening

Prostate Specific Antigen (PSA) is the most common test used to screen for prostate cancer; it measures the levels of PSA in the blood. PSA is a substance made in the prostate. PSA blood levels can be higher in men who have prostate cancer. However, they may also be elevated due to other conditions that affect the prostate.⁶



Talk to your healthcare provider about prostate screening. Researchers and healthcare providers continue to discuss the value of prostate cancer screening. You should discuss the potential benefits and harms of screening with your healthcare provider.

You can reduce your Prostate Cancer Risk!

Because there is no known cause of prostate cancer, it is difficult to determine how to prevent it. You can reduce your risk of prostate cancer by having a healthy lifestyle.

- **Be physically active.** Strive to get at least 30 minutes of physical activity 5 days a week and strength training at least twice a week.
- **Eat Healthy.** Eat more fruits and vegetables, drink more water and fewer sugar-sweetened beverages and create meal plans to cook at home.
- **Don't drink alcohol or limit your alcohol intake.** No more than one drink per day for women, two drinks per day for men.
- **Know your family health history including cancer illnesses and deaths.**
- **Quit tobacco and vaping use.** Quitting takes practice! Coaching and medications can triple your chances of quitting for good. Call 1-800-Quit-Now or check out www.QuitlineNC.com for help.



Treatment

Some forms of prostate cancer are so slow growing they may not require treatment. For those that need treatment, it may include surgery, radiation, chemotherapy and/or hormone therapy. Talk to your cancer doctor about treatment options available for your type and stage of prostate cancer. Your doctor can explain the risks and benefits of each treatment and their side effects.

A cancer diagnosis is an Unexpected Journey.

Talk with your healthcare provider about a health care plan to help track your care and to support your physical and emotional health needs. Ask for a patient navigator. They will help guide you through your journey and connect you to resources and support services. Be your own advocate. Build your support circle. Continue to take steps to be healthy. These steps may help improve your quality of life and lower the risk of your cancer returning.

Take Action!

Use My Health Action Plan to set monthly goals to make healthy lifestyle changes.

<https://publichealth.nc.gov/cccp/>

Don't wait, start on your My Health Action Plan today!

Need help? Talk to your healthcare provider or visit the resources below.

NC DHHS, Cancer Prevention and Control Branch. <https://publichealth.nc.gov/cccp>

American Cancer Society. www.cancer.org

NC Care360. <https://nccare360.org>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Prostate Cancer. www.cdc.gov/cancer/prostate



References

- 1 - Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, What is Prostate Cancer? www.cdc.gov/cancer/prostate/basic_info/what-is-prostate-cancer.htm
- 2 - American Cancer Society, What is Prostate Cancer? www.cancer.org/cancer/prostate-cancer/about/what-is-prostate-cancer.html
- 3 - American Cancer Society, Prostate Cancer Risk Factors. www.cancer.org/cancer/prostate-cancer/causes-risks-prevention/risk-factors.html
- 4 - American Cancer Society, Signs and Symptoms of Prostate Cancer. www.cancer.org/cancer/prostate-cancer/detection-diagnosis-staging/signs-symptoms.html
- 5 - State Center for Health Statistics, North Carolina Department of Health and Human Resources, Central Cancer Registry. <https://schs.dph.ncdhhs.gov/data/cancer.cfm>
- 6 - Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, What Is Screening for Prostate Cancer? www.cdc.gov/cancer/prostate/basic_info/screening.html



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