



A Spiritual Guide to Prostate Cancer & Screening



Project HEAL

Health through Early Awareness and Learning



Did you know?...

- That in 2013, about 176,000 men were told they had prostate cancer, and close to 28,000 men died from it.
- Prostate cancer is the second leading cause of cancer death for African American Men.
- Prostate cancer is the most common type of cancer found among African American men today.
- Men with a father or brother who has had prostate cancer have a higher risk of getting prostate cancer.
- As a man gets older, his risk for getting prostate cancer gets higher.

Lower your risks...

Beloved, I pray that you may prosper in all things and be in health, just as your soul prospers.

111 John 1:2 [NKJV]

“I have come to understand that loving you, means taking care of yourself.”

You might lower your risks for getting prostate cancer if you:

- Know your family history
- Talk with your doctor about getting tested
- Keep track of your PSA score **over time**
- Eat plenty of fruits and vegetables and limit the fat in your diet
- Exercise for 30 minutes or more at least five days a week
- Keep a healthy weight
- Don't smoke
- See your doctor and have check-ups at least once a year

Have Faith

*Then Jesus answered,
"....you have great faith!
Your request is granted."*

Matthew 15:28a [NIV]

We endure

As men, we are used to toughing it out. We endure pain without complaint. We don't run to the doctor for every little ache and pain. There is a lot on our minds: providing for family, keeping the lights on, making it to work on time. Missing work for a doctor's appointment when we don't feel sick just isn't what we do. Being healthy means that we feel okay today.





You often hear brothers talk about “Don’t go looking for problems.” Nobody wants to go looking for a problem. But think about preventive care. Preventive care is the little things you do today to avoid a big problem down the road.

*Think about the maintenance that you do for a car or truck, like **regular oil changes** every 3,000 miles. We do these little things to avoid a big problem down the road. **We do maintenance so the things we value will last.***

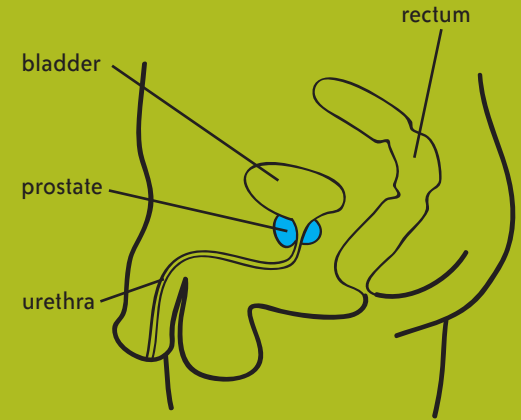


The prostate

The prostate is a walnut-sized gland that only men have. It is part of the **reproductive** system. The prostate makes the fluid that carries sperm. It is located in front of the rectum and just below bladder.

Prostate cancer

Prostate cancer is made up of cells that do not grow normally. The cells divide and make new cells that the body does not need. This mass of tissue is called a tumor. These abnormal cells sometimes spread to other parts of the body, multiply, and can cause cancer.



Get Wisdom

*Blessed are those who
find wisdom, those who
gain understanding.*

Proverbs 3:13 [NIV]

“Being a Black man puts me at risk for prostate cancer. I started having my DRE and PSA checked every year, and I turned 45.”

Know your risk factors

- African American men have the highest rates of prostate cancer in the United States.
- If our father or brother had prostate cancer, then we have a greater risk for getting it.
- The risk for getting prostate cancer increases as we age.

We need to know our risks for getting prostate cancer. We should think about getting tested for it every year starting at age 45. If our father or brother had prostate cancer, we should talk to our doctor about getting tested at a younger age. If we get prostate cancer, we want to be able to find and [make a decision about treatment or active surveillance](#) (see [p. 16](#)). God gives us the free will and the medical technology to fight this disease—it’s our responsibility to use it!



**What you do not know
can cause you to lose your
peace, your joy and your life.**

Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things. Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice.

Philippians 4:8-9a [NIV]



We shouldn't be afraid to have a test that might save our life. It's ok to tell the doctor that we want to understand more, talk about prostate cancer, and get tested for it.

“At no time did I display any of the typical symptoms...Just because you don't have any symptoms doesn't mean you are not in the early stages.”



Some common symptoms of prostate cancer

- seeing blood in urine
- needing to urinate (pee) often, especially at night
- trouble starting or holding back urine
- a pain or burning feeling while urinating
- having trouble urinating
- a constant pain in the lower back and/or pelvis

If you have any of these symptoms, you need to see your doctor. These symptoms are not always due to cancer. They can be caused by an infection or another health problem. God promises to take care of His children, but we have to take that first step and do our part.



Take care of yourself

Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own.

1 Corinthians 6:19 [NIV]



*“Take care of yourself, find and treat a problem early. You can have prostate cancer and not know it. Just like with high blood pressure and diabetes, many men **with** prostate cancer have no symptoms.”*

- Eat plenty of fruits and vegetables and limit the fat in your diet
- Exercise for 30 minutes or more at least five days a week
- Keep a healthy weight
- Don't smoke
- See your doctor and have check-ups at least once a year



**Pass on
knowledge
from generation
to generation**

***But showing love to a
thousand generations
of those who love
me and keep my
commandments.***

Exodus 20:6 [NIV]

“God requires us to share what we know with others.”

- Fathers, sons and brothers, talk about your family health history when you get together with your family.
- Prostate cancer survivors, tell your story. Be a witness to someone else.
- Listen to the women in your lives. They want us to be healthy.



Catch it early

*The wise prevail
through great power,
and those who have
knowledge muster
their strength.*

Proverbs 24:5 [NIV]



Screening

Screening means looking for signs of disease when you have no symptoms. The main ways to screen for prostate cancer are the digital rectal examination (DRE) and the prostate specific antigen (PSA) test. These tests cannot tell if you have cancer for sure. They can only tell if you need more tests.

The DRE

The DRE or digital (finger) rectal examination is a quick exam for checking the size, shape, and feel of the prostate. For this test, the doctor inserts a gloved and lubricated finger into the rectum. This lets the doctor feel the back part of the prostate to tell if it feels uneven or abnormal.

The PSA

PSA stands for “Prostate Specific Antigen.” PSA is a protein made by cells from the prostate gland. The PSA test measures the PSA level in the blood. For this test, a small amount of blood is taken from the arm to see if the PSA level is normal.

Getting a second opinion

***The LORD spoke to
me again.***

Isaiah 8:5 [NIV]

How accurate are the screening tests?

No test is right all the time. The DRE can sometimes help tell if there is cancer in a man with a normal PSA level. Getting both the PSA test and the DRE can find prostate cancer before there are any symptoms.

Going to a specialist

A urologist is a doctor who has special training in prostate-related problems. If the urologist suspects cancer, he might use a needle to take tiny tissue samples from the prostate. This test is called a biopsy.



You have an obligation; know your rights

Therefore, brothers and sisters, we have an obligation...

Romans 8:12a [NIV]

"Handle your business as soon as possible. You owe it to your family."

The decision to be screened for prostate cancer

Although not all medical experts agree on screening, the decision is up to you and your doctor. You need to know your risk factors, the pros and cons for prostate cancer screening, and make an informed choice. Don't rely on your doctor to tell you it is time to start getting checked. It is your job to tell your doctor if you want to be tested.

"I was devastated and shocked. The best thing that happened to me was that I was blessed to have detected my cancer as early as I did and to have the treatment I did."



If you have Medicare: All men age 50 and above are eligible for prostate cancer screening. Medicare covers a digital rectal exam and Prostate Specific Antigen (PSA) test every 12 months. For more information visit www.medicare.gov or call (800) 633-4227.

If you have Medicaid: Your prostate cancer screening should be covered. Call [\(877\) 267-2323](tel:8772672323) to find out for sure.

For low-cost prostate cancer screenings:

- **American Cancer Society**

- To find free or low-cost screening and resources near you visit www.cancer.org/treatment/index
- Or call the American Cancer Society at [\(800\) 227-2345](tel:8002272345).

- **Maryland, Virginia, and Washington, D.C. Residents**

- Visit cancer.howard.edu/patients/screening.htm



If prostate cancer is found

By wisdom a house is built, and through understanding it is established.

Proverbs 24:3 [NIV]

When prostate cancer is found early and has not spread beyond the prostate, you and your doctor may decide on:

- **Watchful Waiting (active surveillance)**—A treatment option for prostate cancer. It involves doing the *prostate specific antigen test* and *digital rectal examination* at regular intervals to monitor the growth of prostate cancer.
- **Radical Prostatectomy**—Surgery to remove the *prostate*.
- **External radiation therapy**—Destroying *cancer* cells by targeting radiation at *tumor* from outside the body.



- **Internal radiation therapy (implant radiation therapy or brachytherapy)**—Surgically placing small radioactive pellets near the tumor to destroy *cancer* cells.
- **Hormone therapy**—Treatment that adds, blocks, or removes *hormones* to keep *cancer* cells from growing.
- **Cryotherapy**—Freezing the *cancer* cells to destroy them.

The type of treatment that is right for you will depend on a number of things such as the stage of the cancer, the grade of the tumor, your symptoms, and your general health. Side effects will depend on the type and amount of treatment. Side effects may not be the same for each man, and they may change from one treatment to the next.



Notes



References

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