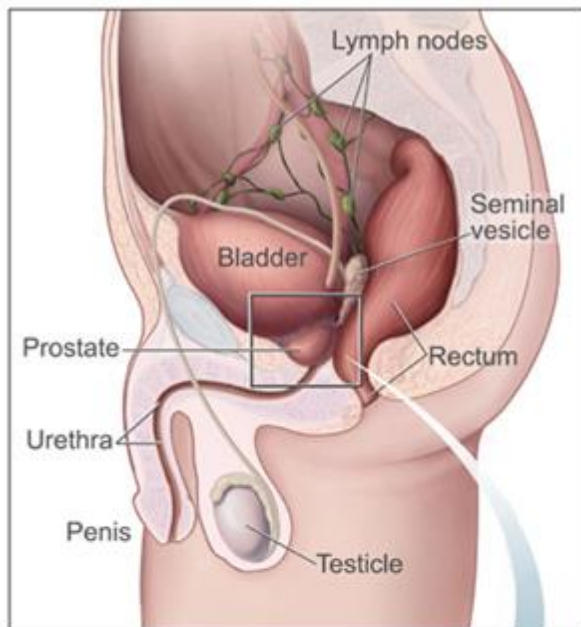


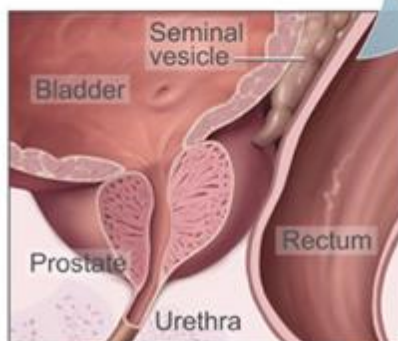
Prostate Cancer

The Prostate

The prostate is a walnut-sized gland in a man's reproductive system. It is located below the bladder in front of the rectum (see graphic below). It surrounds the upper part of the urethra, which is the tube that empties urine from the bladder. If the prostate grows too large, the flow of urine may slow or stop.



This shows the prostate and nearby organs.



This shows the inside of the prostate, urethra, rectum, and bladder.

About Cancer

Cancer is a group of many different diseases that have some important things in common. Cancer affects cells, the body's basic unit of life. Sometimes, cells keep dividing when new cells are not needed. These cells form a mass of extra tissue called a growth or tumor. Tumors can be benign or malignant.

Benign tumors are not cancer. They can often be removed and, in most cases, do not return. Cells in benign tumors do not spread to other parts of the body. Most important, benign tumors are rarely a threat to life.

Malignant tumors are cancer. Cells in malignant tumors are abnormal and divide without control or order. These cancer cells can invade and destroy the tissues around them. Cancer cells can also break away from a malignant tumor and enter the bloodstream or the lymphatic system. This is how the cancer spreads from the original (primary) tumor to form new tumors in other parts of the body.

Prostate Cancer

Prostate cancer is a disease in which malignant cells are found in the prostate. The cause of prostate cancer is not well understood. Doctors cannot explain why one man gets prostate cancer and another does not. Although several other cell types are found in the prostate, more than 99 percent of prostate cancers develop from the glandular cells. The medical term for a cancer that starts in glandular cells is adenocarcinoma. Because other types of prostate cancer are so rare, if you have prostate cancer, it is most likely adenocarcinoma.

Treatment

Different types of treatment are available for prostate cancer. Some treatments are standard (currently used) and some are being tested in clinical trials.

Choosing the most appropriate cancer treatment involves the patient, family and health care team. For a detailed description of treatment options, ask your nurse for a copy of *Multidisciplinary Prostate Cancer Clinic: A Guide to Treatment Options*.

Types of Standard Treatment

Because prostate cancer often grows very slowly, some men – especially those who are older or have other serious health problems – may never need treatment. Instead, their doctors may recommend active surveillance, an approach commonly known as "watchful waiting." This involves closely monitoring the cancer without active treatment such as surgery or radiation treatment.

Surgery to remove the prostate is called prostatectomy. If surgery is your best treatment option, your doctor will discuss the procedure with you.

Radiation treatment uses high-energy x-rays or other types of radiation to kill cancer cells or keep them from growing. External beam radiation is a common type of therapy for prostate cancer.

Medical treatments include hormone therapy, chemotherapy and new drugs that disrupt a particular function within the cancer cell.

Clinical Trials

Clinical trials are people-based studies – as opposed to animal or lab studies – of new drugs or procedures. Doctors use clinical trials to learn whether a new treatment is safe and effective in patients. Many of the new drugs being studied are intended to disrupt a particular chemical pathway or function within the cancer cell. Clinical trials exploring the effectiveness of new prostate cancer drugs are usually available.

Resources

The following organizations provide accurate, up-to-date information on prostate cancer to patients and their families.

The American Cancer Society (ACS) is a voluntary national health organization with local offices around the country. The ACS supports research, provides information about cancer and offers many programs and services to patients and their families. For more information, call 800.227.2345 or visit www.cancer.org.

The National Comprehensive Cancer Network[®] (NCCN), a not-for-profit alliance of 26 of the world's leading cancer centers, is dedicated to improving the quality, effectiveness and efficiency of care provided to patients with cancer. The translations of the NCCN clinical guidelines are meant to help patients with cancer talk with their physicians about the best treatment options for their disease. For more information, visit www.nccn.org/patients.

The Cancer Information Service (CIS) is a program of the National Cancer Institute. People who call the CIS speak with highly trained and caring information specialists who can answer questions about cancer screening tests, risks, symptoms, how cancer is diagnosed, the latest treatments and support organizations. For more information, call 800.422.6237.

The National Cancer Institute has valuable cancer-related health information for over 200 cancer types, clinical trials, cancer statistics, prevention, screening, treatment and news. For more information, visit www.cancer.gov.