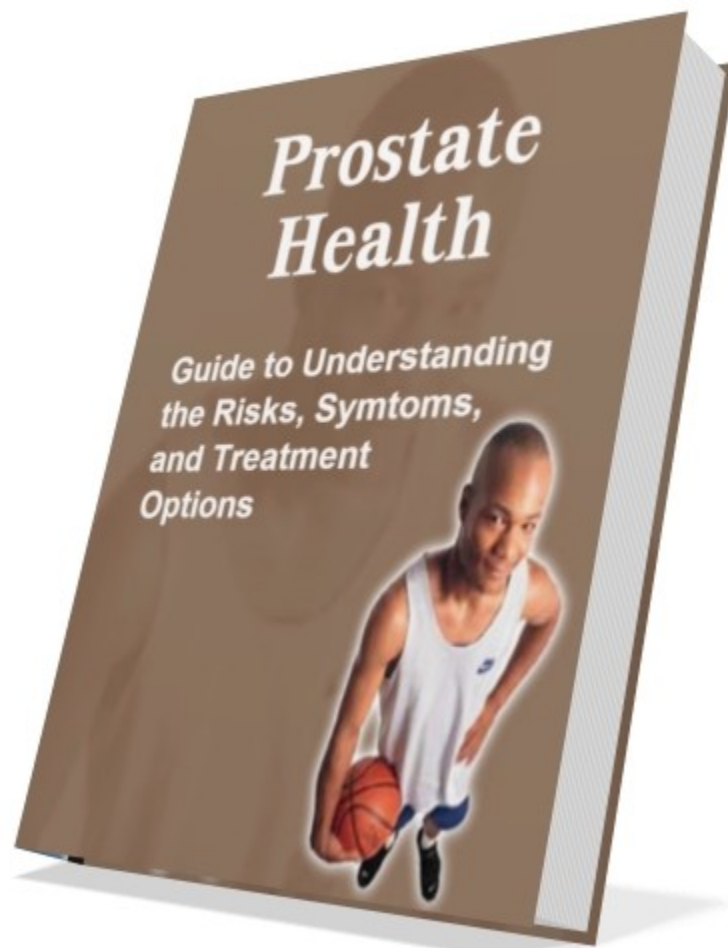


# Prostate Health

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**Guide to Understanding the Risks, Symptoms, and  
Treatment Options**



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## INTRODUCTION

There was a time in history when there was no awareness of the prostate, let alone diagnosis and treatment. Countless numbers of men throughout the ages have suffered and died as a result of this ignorance.

Through the miracles of modern medicine, today prostate disease is well defined and is no longer necessarily considered a death sentence. The most effective methods for handling prostate disease are knowledge and prevention.

In our guide we will help you understand prostate disease, various diagnostic tools, and provide recommendations for treatment.

## WHAT IS THE PROSTATE?

The first step toward understanding how the prostate affects your health is to learn what the prostate is and how it functions. It is surprising how little many men know about such an important part of their anatomy.

The prostate is an important segment of the male reproductive system. It is a gland that is located in the lower abdominal cavity, just below the bladder, in front of the rectum, and behind the pubic bone. It partially surrounds the urethra. The urethra is the channel that carries urine to the penis from the bladder and it runs right through the prostate.

A healthy prostate is about the size of a walnut, weighs approximately 1 ounce, and is shaped similar to a donut.

There are “seminal vesicles” that are attached to the prostate. They produce a protein that mixes with prostatic fluid which forms semen. How this works is that tubes from the testicles carry sperm up to the prostate where sperm is mixed with the seminal vesicle and prostatic fluids.

This fluid is ejaculated during orgasm through ejaculatory ducts that connect to the urethra. In addition, the prostate helps to control the flow of urine.

Nearly every man will experience some type of prostate problem during his lifetime. Men who are over forty-five may experience an enlargement of the prostate. While this is not a problem in itself, it is uncomfortable and can be a forerunner to other more serious maladies which we will discuss further.

The prostate actually continues to grow throughout life, but grows very slowly after the age of twenty-five. Enlargement of the prostate is part of the normal aging process due to hormonal changes and usually does not become a serious problem until a man reaches sixty years of age.

## SYMPTOMS OF PROSTATE PROBLEMS

Enlargement of the prostate is called benign prostate hypertrophy or BPH. While this growth is usually considered a nuisance, if a man experiences problems with burning or difficult urination at any time, the prudent course of action is consulting a urologist.

Other symptoms may be:

- A feeling of having to push out urine
- A sensation that the bladder is not emptying
- Increased urinating, especially at night
- Intermittent starting and stopping of the urinary stream

After a diagnosis of BPH, many men will just continue to live with the symptoms and subsequent discomfort. It is not a life threatening condition and there are treatments. In some cases surgery might be considered if the enlargement is significant.

Ignoring BPH can be extremely dangerous and can lead to other disease such as kidney infections or damage as the urine can back up into the kidneys because of the blockage of an enlarged prostate. There can also be an occurrence of bladder infections.

There is a huge difference between BPH and prostate cancer. BPH is a normal part of aging. Prostate cancer is a condition where