SHOULD I BE TESTED FOR PROSTATE CANCER?

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What is prostate cancer?
The prostate gland is a walnut-shaped gland that lies below the bladder in men. Cancer in the prostate is the result of abnormal growth which may go on to invade surrounding or distant organs.

Facts about prostate cancer...

What is prostate cancer?
Yes! Prostate cancer is the 3rd most common cancer in Singaporean men and the risk increases with age. Death from prostate cancer is less common as only some cases will progress to advanced disease. For an average healthy man, the risk of dying from prostate cancer is around 3%.

Is prostate cancer related to benign prostatic hypertrophy (BPH)?
No! Prostate cancer is a different disease from benign prostatic hypertrophy (BPH). In BPH, growth of the prostate can affect urine flow but cannot spread to other organs and does not affect lifespan.
Is Prostate Cancer a dangerous disease?
It can be. If you suffer from a fast-growing prostate cancer, the cancer can grow and spread beyond the prostate gland to other organs. Cancer that has spread this way is called metastatic prostate cancer.

But not always.
Many prostate cancers are slow-growing tumours that will remain limited to the prostate gland and have no effect on lifespan. Slow-growing tumours will need close monitoring and may not need treatment.

Is Prostate Cancer treatable?
Yes! There are many treatments for fast-growing prostate cancer. However, once it has spread beyond the prostate, treatments can control symptoms and reduce further spreading but less likely for a complete cure.

Does Prostate Cancer have any symptoms?
Not always! Prostate cancer may produce no symptoms at all in early stages. Once the cancer has spread, it can cause serious symptoms.

Of all eighty-year-old men who died of unrelated causes such as heart disease, nearly half had small cancerous growths in their prostate.

DIAGNOSIS at early stages through screening may detect the disease when it is still curable.
# Prostate cancer at different stages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage at Diagnosis</th>
<th>Early Prostate Cancer</th>
<th>Advanced Prostate Cancer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Tumor" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Tumor" /></td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symptoms</th>
<th>• Usually none</th>
<th>• Difficulty urinating</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• May have urinary</td>
<td>• Blood in the urine or</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>symptoms</td>
<td>semen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Pain from cancer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>spreading to the bone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Tiredness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>• Loss of weight</td>
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| Treatment           | • Slow-growing cancers| • Cancer has spread beyond  |
|---------------------|• may need monitoring | the prostate and cannot be cured |
|                     | only                  | • Surgery to remove the testes |
|                     |                       | or medicines that block male |
|                     |                       | hormones can slow the      |
|                     |                       | growth of prostate cancer  |
|                     |                       | • Very advanced prostate cancer   |
|                     |                       | may need chemotherapy or   |
|                     |                       | radiation therapy          |

| Outcomes            | • 90% of the patients | • 40% of the patients survive |
|---------------------|• survive more than    | more than 5 years.           |
|                     | 15 years              | In Singapore, one in four men |
|                     | • With treatment,     | with prostate cancer         |
|                     | the chance of cancer  | have advanced disease       |
|                     | spread is low         | when diagnosed.              |
|                     |                       | Early diagnosis with        |
|                     |                       | screening can reduce this   |
|                     |                       | number by half.              |

In Singapore, one in four men with prostate cancer have advanced disease when diagnosed. Early diagnosis with screening can reduce this number by half.
The PSA Test should you take it?

What is involved in a prostate biopsy?
During a prostate biopsy, a fine needle is used to remove small samples from the prostate gland and then examined for cancer. There are risks of complications such as pain, blood in the urine, infection and temporary difficulty in passing urine.

What is the benefit of PSA testing?
For men who develop fast-growing prostate cancer, PSA testing allows diagnosis at an earlier stage where the cancer is still limited to the prostate. Early diagnosis reduces the chance of cancer spreading to other parts of the body and death.

What is the PSA TEST?
The PSA test is a blood test that measures levels of prostate-specific antigens (PSA) and is used for the screening of prostate cancer. Men with prostate cancer usually have a higher PSA level.

Does a high PSA test result mean you have prostate cancer?
Not always! Many other conditions of the prostate that are not cancerous can also increase PSA levels such as BPH and infection. If PSA is high, a biopsy test may be required to determine if there is prostate cancer.
What can I expect if I take the PSA test?

**PSA Blood Test Step 1**
- 80% of men tested have a NORMAL PSA level
- No need for prostate biopsy as risk of having prostate cancer is low. Re-testing can be considered in 3-5 years.
- 20% of men tested have a HIGH PSA level
- A prostate biopsy is usually recommended. The PSA test may be repeated before deciding for biopsy.

**PSA Biopsy Step 2**
- **25%** chance that the biopsy will find cancer
- **75%** chance that there is no cancer. Some cancers may be missed on biopsy so further monitoring of PSA levels may be required. Some men may need more than one biopsy.
- **0.5%** chance of serious complications from the biopsy requiring hospitalization.

**DIAGNOSIS of PROSTATE CANCER**
- 1 out of 12 MEN screened will be diagnosed with Prostate Cancer.
- Not all prostate cancers need treatment, some may require monitoring only. If treatment is required, early diagnosis through PSA testing and monitoring can mean:
  - **50%** reduction in risk of the prostate cancer spreading.
  - **20%** reduction in risk of death from prostate cancer.
The majority of men found to have high PSA levels may become anxious after being tested. These men may then undergo a biopsy, only to find out that they do not have cancer. Many cancers diagnosed through PSA testing are slow-growing and therefore will only require monitoring, which may be stressful for some men.

With reference to the diagram above, out of every hundred men screened with PSA testing, twenty men will have a high PSA level and need a biopsy. Out of these twenty men, two men may have complications such as infection and bleeding, and four men will have prostate cancer in which some of whom will need treatment.

For every eight hundred men who receive PSA testing, we can save one man who would have died from prostate cancer if it was not detected early.
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