

Men's Health – Prostate

Prostate Facts:

The prostate is a walnut size gland made up of glandular tissue and is located beneath the urinary bladder. The prostate encircles the urinary outlet. Women do **not** have one, only men. It is part of the male reproductive system. The muscles in the prostate are necessary for ejecting the seminal fluid.

The prostate is the most common site for disorders in the male reproductive system. There are three conditions that one should be aware of:

Prostatitis- This means inflammation of the prostate gland. This can be caused by invasive bacteria, and or hormonal changes associated with aging are the usual reasons for inflammation. The inflammation then can restrict urinary flow, causing urinary retention. Urinary retention then in turn leads to bladder distension, and possible kidney infection. If left untreated it can lead to impotence and/or kidney damage.

Symptoms: frequent urination, painful urination, abdominal pain, pain after ejaculation.

If you have any of the listed symptoms, please see your doctor for diagnosis, do not wait. Naturopaths can supply herbs to help clear the body of infection, soothe the mucosal membranes, ease the pain while recovering from infection; however, you **MUST** see your doctor first for lab testing and a diagnosis.

Benign Prostatic Hypertrophy-(BPH) Hypertrophy of the prostate means enlargement of the prostate. This type of enlargement is a gradual one. It occurs in over 50% of men over the age of 50. It is attributed to hormonal changes associated with ageing. Testosterone levels start to decrease and the levels of prolactin and estradiol start to increase. This causes the increase in dihydrotestosterone, a form of testosterone that is more potent and affects the tissues of the prostate. BPH is not cancerous but it does constrict the urinary flow, can increase bladder infections and can thus cause back pressure on the kidneys.

Symptoms: Frequent urination, including frequent night time urination, difficulty in starting urination, dribbling afterward, there may be pain or burning, and sometimes there may be a pink colour to the urine indicating the presence of blood.

Testing for BPH can be done at your doctors; a digital exam is necessary and normally a blood test at the lab for the measurement of PSA levels. PSA stands for prostate-specific antigen.

Prostate Cancer- Think this cannot happen to you? If you are a man, think again. Men in their thirties and forties rarely develop CA of the prostate, however those numbers are rising. Most cases occur in men over the age of 60. Once you reach the age of 40 you should be getting your prostate checked regularly. After the age of 55 you should be having an annual health check up with your doctor for blood PSA, triglycerides, blood pressure and prostate screening. **Note: High PSA levels do not mean you have cancer, BPH and inflammation of the prostate can cause elevated levels of PSA as well.**

The prostate has lymph vessels in close proximity that can carry the cancer to other parts of the body. While the rates of prostate cancer have been on the rise, the death rate from prostate cancer has decreased related to early detection and better treatment options. Secondary areas of Cancer from the prostate reduces the chances of survival significantly.

If your father has had prostate cancer then your risk is even higher. If you have had reoccurring prostate infections, venereal disease, or if you have taken testosterone supplements, then you should be aware your risks of developing prostate CA may be higher.

Is your diet high in fats and low in vegetables? You might want to rethink what you are eating...high fat consumption increases testosterone levels. Hormones are stored in our fat.

Symptoms: They are the same as for prostatitis, and BPH except there may also be low back discomfort. **Warning: THERE MAY BE NO SYMPTOMS AT ALL!! SO DON'T BE A STATISTIC....GET CHECKED!**

Maintaining Your Prostate Health

1. Maintain a diet that is high in bright coloured vegetables. (If you are asking “what is a vegetable?” right now.....please run, do not walk to your nearest nutritionist or naturopath for dietary counselling.).

Consumption of vegetables and fruit that are high in antioxidants helps promote normal cell growth and function. Some examples would be blueberries, tomatoes, broccoli, pumpkin, carrots, and sweet potato. If they are bright in colour, eat them raw if appropriate or mildly steamed. Boiling reduces their nutrients. Pure sugarless cranberry juice helps maintain urinary tract health.

2. Take steps to control your cholesterol. See your naturopath for an annual liver detox and easy nutritional steps to keep your body’s best organ of elimination functioning optimally.
3. In a hurry, no time to prepare vegetables? Then hit the juice bar and ask for carrot or cabbage juice. When dining out choose Thai food, Chinese vegetable dishes, or something similar that is loaded in veggies. Avoid FRENCH FRIES. Ask for no MSG.
4. How are your Zinc levels? Zinc is a necessary mineral for men’s reproductive health. A simple taste test can be done at your [naturopath’s office](#). Zinc is found in sardines, pumpkin seeds, seafood, spinach, sunflower seeds, whole grains.
5. Use cold pressed oils such as olive oil and flax seed oil on salads. When cooking use less heat sensitive oils like sesame or grape seed oil. If the label says modified or hydrogenated oils, avoid it.
6. Get regular physical activity. Men who are sedentary or obese are more at risk for prostate issue.
7. Enjoy regular sexual activity; regular ejaculation activates the prostate gland.
8. Avoid known carcinogens, eat organic foods when available, avoid smoking, polluted water, and foods that have a lot of additives. Ie: processed foods found in the centre aisles of the grocery store.

9. Reduce your consumption of red meat. Eat lean organic chicken, fish, and more vegetable dishes.

- 10.Reduce your consumption of dairy products. Choose brown rice milk or non-genetically modified soy milk. A good brand is BONSOY. Hazelnut milk is also low in carbs and fat and is tasty.

Supplements to keep your prostate healthy:

Green tea:	Loaded in antioxidants.
Selenium	Protects cells from toxins. Take with vitamin E for even more protection.
Vitamin B complex	50 mg of all major B vitamins. They work best together and are necessary for cellular function
Zinc	60-80mg daily. Deficiency has been linked to prostate problems. Chelated form of Zinc better choice than zinc sulphate alone.
Essential fatty acids	Fish oil that has been screened for heavy metals. Phytomedicine and Nordic both good brands. Increase you intake of egg, avocado, flax seed.
Garlic	Natural antibiotic
Vitamin E	Use d-alpha tocopherol form
Magnesium and calcium	Essential for normal prostate function

There is so much you can do to maintain healthy cells in your body. Taking time to get advise from a naturopath or nutritionist is worth it. Seeing your doctor for regular checkups is much better than having to visit an oncologist. So please, take time out once a year to see your doctor and clean up your body.

If you already have a diagnosis from your doctor that your prostate is not healthy then come in and see us at [House of Sage](#) we have herbs that can help ease your symptoms and great, easy to follow nutritional advise.