

## About Prostate Cancer

The more you know about the normal development and function of the prostate—where it's located and what it's attached to—the better you can understand how prostate cancer develops and impacts a man's life over time, due to either cancer growth or as a result of treatments.

### Early Detection and Screening

When to start screening is generally based on individual risk, with age 40 being a reasonable time to start screening for those at highest risk (genetic predispositions or strong family histories of prostate cancer at a young age). For otherwise healthy men at high risk (positive family history or African American men), starting at age 40-45 is reasonable.

The purpose of screening is to detect prostate cancer at its earliest stages, before any symptoms have developed. Some men do experience symptoms that might indicate the presence of prostate cancer or other prostate diseases or disorders (such as BPH or prostatitis), these men will undergo a more thorough work-up.

Typically, prostate cancer detected by screening in the very early-stages can be treated most effectively. Physicians can screen for prostate cancer quickly and easily in their office using two tests: PSA (prostate-specific antigen) blood test and the digital rectal exam (DRE).

### Treatment Options

There is no "one size fits all" treatment. You should learn as much as possible about the many treatment options available and, in conjunction with your physicians, make a decision about what's best for you. Because men diagnosed with localized prostate cancer today may live for many years, any decision made now will probably reverberate for a long time.

Your decision-making process will likely include a combination of clinical and psychological factors, including: the need for therapy, your level of risk, your personal circumstances and your desire for a certain therapy based on risks, benefits, and your intuition. Current treatment options currently include: active surveillance, prostatectomy, radiation therapy, hormone therapy, immunotherapy and chemotherapy.

Consultation with all three types of prostate cancer specialists—a urologist, a radiation oncologist, and a medical oncologist—will give you the most comprehensive assessment of the available treatments and expected outcomes. Many hospitals and universities have multidisciplinary prostate cancer clinics that can provide this three-part consultation service.

### The Future of Prostate Cancer Research

With the continued investment in prostate cancer research by the Prostate Cancer Foundation, biopharmaceutical companies and government agencies, novel therapies and alternative treatment strategies are continually being studied in research laboratories and clinical trials across the country to design the right therapy for every man. All of these programs serve to support the mission of the Prostate Cancer Foundation; to find better treatments and a cure for prostate cancer.