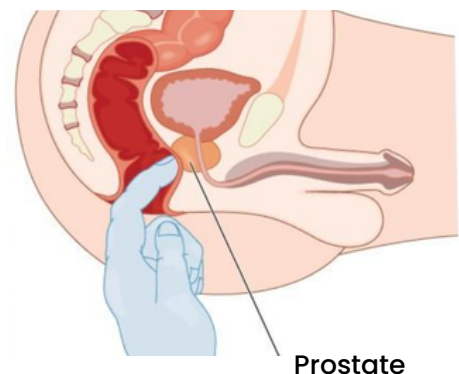
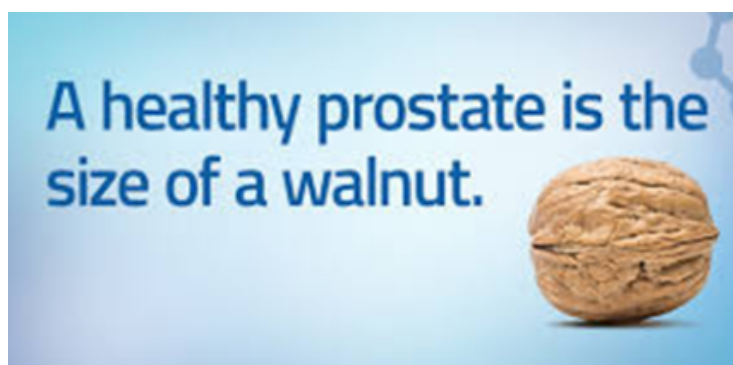


# The Prostate and BPH- Benign prostatic hyperplasia (Enlarged prostate)

## What is the Prostate?

The prostate gland's main function is to produce fluid that nourishes and transports sperm. This fluid is part of semen. Muscles in the prostate help propel semen out during ejaculation.

The prostate sits below the bladder. It surrounds the urethra (urine tube) and plays a role in urine control by acting as a valve, preventing urine leakage and semen mixing. It also helps manage testosterone, which is important for male development.



## What is a Prostate Examination?

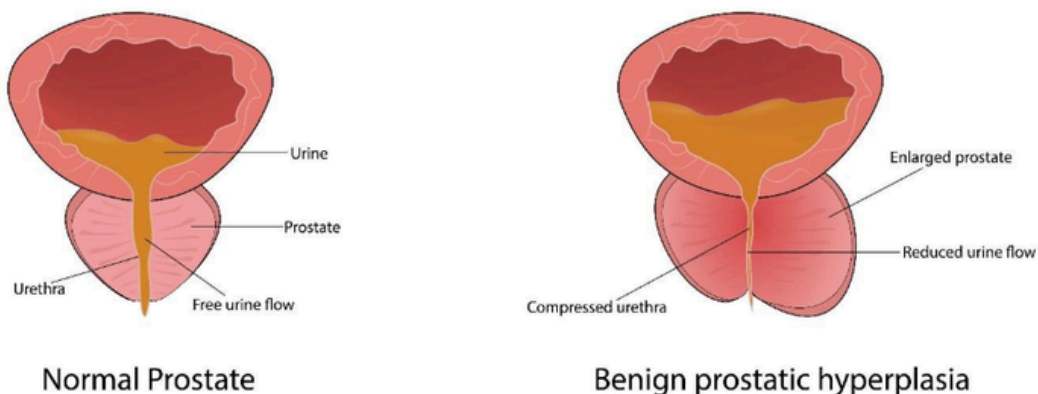
A prostate examination is to check prostate health. This is done a quick, digital rectal examination (DRE). Some people find this uncomfortable. You will be asked to lie on your side, whilst your health care professional will feel your prostate by placing a finger into the rectum (back passage) to feel for lumps and assess the size of your prostate. They will wear a glove while doing this and use lubrication.

A blood test to measure protein levels (called a prostate specific antigen or PSA) will also be recommended.

## What is BPH?

BPH, or Benign Prostatic Hyperplasia, is a common, non-cancerous enlargement of the prostate gland. It affects many older men.

BPH is caused by normal aging processes and hormonal changes. It is not cancer and it is not caused by cancer. A family history of prostate problems can increase your risk.



### What are the possible symptoms?

- Urinary Frequency: Needing to pass urine often, especially at night (nocturia)
- Urinary urgency: a sudden, strong need to pass urine
- Hesitancy: Difficulty starting the urine stream
- Weak Stream: A slow or intermittent flow that may stop and start
- Incomplete Emptying: Feeling like your bladder isn't fully empty
- Dribbling: Leakage after finishing urination

### What are the treatment options?

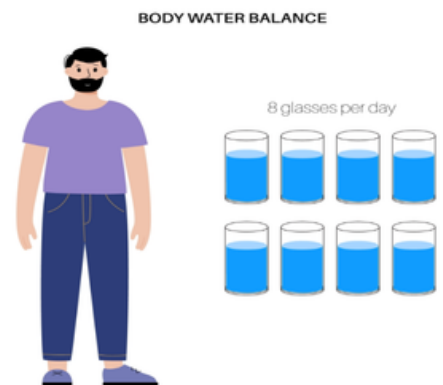
Your healthcare professional will discuss options with you. An enlarged prostate does not always need treatment. It depends on your symptoms and how they're affecting you.

If your symptoms are not causing many problems, doctors will usually recommend trying lifestyle changes first. This may also be referred to as 'watchful waiting'

If your symptoms get worse, you may need medicines or surgery. ([see TURP leaflet](#))

### What can I do to help?

- Reduce alcohol and caffeine, as they can make you pass urine more, avoid before bed
- Aim to drink 6-8 drinks a day, aim for water-based drinks where possible
- Do not restrict your fluid intake, this can make your symptoms worse & potentially cause a urinary tract infection
- Plan journeys with adequate stops – see Toilet map link below
- Have a just can't wait card & Radar key to hand for ease of toilet access
- Ensure you eat enough fibre to help prevent constipation. Constipation will put extra pressure on your bladder
- Maintain a healthy weight, as being overweight can make symptoms worse
- Try '**double voiding**'. After you have had pee, wait & try peeing again, this will help empty your bladder
- Try the '**Milking technique**'. This involves putting your fingertips 3 finger widths behind your scrotum after you finish peeing and gently pressing while moving your fingers forwards and upwards towards the tip of your penis, to help push the last few drops out
- Try pelvic floor exercises. ([see our leaflet on Pelvic Floor Exercises for Men](#)).
- **Do not strain to pass urine, try & relax & take deep breaths whilst passing urine**



### What other support is available?

If you experience urinary leakage most days, you may require containment -aids, or urinary sheath to aid management of your symptoms. You can discuss this with your health care professional.

### Medication for an enlarged prostate

If you have moderate or severe symptoms you may be offered medicines for an enlarged prostate.

These may include the following:

Medication that will help you to pee by reducing the resistance in the urethra, such as **tamsulosin, doxazosin or alfuzosin**

Medication that will help reduce the urge to pee more often or more urgently but relaxing the bladder muscle, such as **oxybutynin or tolterodine**.

If you're at high risk of your condition getting worse you may be offered medication that will help stop your prostate growing, by reducing hormone levels, such as **finasteride or dutasteride** .

These medicines can cause side effects. Your doctor will explain the benefits and possible side effects and help you decide if they are right for you.

You'll have regular check-ups to see how well the medicine is working.

#### Further Information

- [Just can't wait cards](#)
- <https://www.continenceproductadvisor.org/#men>
- <https://prostatematters.co.uk/>
- [https://thepogp.co.uk/mens\\_health.aspx](https://thepogp.co.uk/mens_health.aspx)
- <https://www.toiletmap.org.uk/>
- <https://www.mypelvichealth.co.uk/en/men/continence-management-treatment/urinary-incontinence-severe-24-hours-plus/mens-liberty-products/mens-liberty/>

Find more information about bladder and bowel health in our information library at [www.bbuk.org.uk](http://www.bbuk.org.uk). You can also contact the [Bladder & Bowel UK confidential helpline \(0161 214 4591\)](#).

For further advice on bladder and bowel problems speak to your GP or other healthcare professional.

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