

Prostate cancer is the most common cancer in men. About 189,000 new cases will be diagnosed this year. Prostate cancer can also be deadly. About 30,200 men will die of the disease this year. Prostate cancer accounts for 30% of all male cancers and 11% of all male cancer-related deaths. The rate of prostate cancer is at least 50% higher among African-American men than among men in other ethnic or racial groups.

American Cancer Society's
**Guidelines
for the
Early Detection
of Prostate
Cancer**

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Hope. Progress. Answers.



The American Cancer Society recognizes there are points of controversy regarding prostate cancer screening. Therefore, it is important that you discuss the subject with your health care provider. Using a variety of tests, doctors may often find prostate cancer when the disease is still at an early stage, even before men have symptoms of the disease. This is important because when the disease is found early there may be more effective treatment options to choose from. The number of deaths from prostate cancer has gone down, suggesting that this is a result of screening, but this has *not* been proven.

Most importantly, the decision to be screened for prostate cancer should be based on your individual medical condition and health care needs. Men who choose to undergo screening should begin at age 50.

However, men in high-risk groups, such as African Americans or those with brothers or fathers who have had prostate cancer, should begin screening at age 45.

The PSA Blood Test

The PSA (prostate-specific antigen) blood test is a very important tool for detecting prostate cancer. During the test, blood is drawn and measured for a substance called PSA, which is produced by prostate gland cells. If the amount of PSA in your blood is higher than normal, it does not necessarily mean that you have prostate cancer. Several less serious conditions can also cause PSA levels to rise.

Just to be sure, your doctor may recommend that you have a second PSA test at a later time to see if your PSA level remains high, or order additional tests, such as a free (unbound) PSA blood test, transrectal ultrasound, or a biopsy to find out if cancer is present.

The American Cancer Society Recommends:

At age 50, talk with your health care provider about beginning annual prostate-specific antigen (PSA) blood testing and digital rectal exams (DRE) of the prostate gland. Factors to consider include your overall health and life-expectancy.

Men who are in high-risk groups, such as African Americans or men who have a history of prostate cancer in close family members, should begin screenings at age 45.

Prostate Cancer Testing: A Personal Decision

It comes down to this: Each man's situation is different. To decide on a personalized plan of care, you should discuss early detection tests for prostate cancer with your physician. For your own health and peace of mind, the American Cancer Society recommends that all men understand benefits and limitations of early detection and treatment of prostate cancer before screening.