



Glossary of Terms Primary Urethral Cancer

Advanced cancer	A tumour that grows into deeper layers of tissue, adjacent organs, or surrounding muscles.
Anaesthesia (general, spinal, or local)	Medication given before an operation to make sure you don't feel pain. Under general anaesthesia, you are unconscious and unaware of what is happening to you. Under spinal or local anaesthesia, you will not feel pain in the part of your body where the operation is done. Anaesthesia wears off gradually after the procedure.
Bimanual examination	An examination of the abdomen or pelvis performed with both hands.
Biopsy	A medical procedure in which a small piece of tissue is removed from the body for examination. Biopsy provides information for diagnosis, monitoring, and treatment.
Bladder	The organ that collects urine from the kidneys.
Bladder neck	The group of muscles that connect the bladder to the urethra. These muscles contract to keep the urine in the bladder and relax to let the urine pass through the urethra.
Bone scan	A scan of the entire body that can be used to find bone metastases.
Boutonniere	A surgically created opening for the urethra in the perineum.
Catheter	A hollow flexible tube to insert fluids into or drain them from the body. In urology, catheters are generally used to drain urine from the bladder.
Chemotherapy	Treatment of cancer with drugs that are toxic to cells. Some drugs used for chemotherapy specifically kill cells that grow faster than normal, like cancer cells.
Clinical trial	Experimental research studies designed to answer specific questions about treatments or drugs. They generally test how well a treatment works among patients with specific characteristics.
Contrast agent	A substance that makes the structures or fluids in the body easier to see in medical images (see also, Imaging).
CT scan	CT stands for computed tomography. This imaging technique makes a series of x-ray images of the body.

CT urography	CT stands for computed tomography. CT urography is an imaging technique that uses contrast agent to improve the visibility of the lymph nodes and abdominal organs during the CT scan.
Cystoscope	A type of endoscope that uses a camera to transmit pictures from inside the urethra.
Cystoscopy	A test that allows your doctor to examine your urethra and bladder using a cystoscope.
Diagnosis	A series of tests that are done to understand what causes your symptoms.
Digital rectal examination	A test in which the doctor uses a finger to feel the size, shape, and consistency of the prostate to diagnose conditions like an enlarged prostate or prostate cancer
Distant metastases	Tumours that have spread from the original site to other organs or bone.
Diverticulum	A pouch that develops in a tubular structure in the body, such as the urethra.
Endoscope	A flexible or rigid tube-like instrument used to examine the inside of the body.
Haematuria	Blood in the urine. Gross haematuria means blood that can be seen with the eye. Microhaematuria means that blood is present but can only be seen under a microscope.
Histological evaluation	The examination of tissue under a microscope.
Imaging	Taking images of the body with ultrasound, x-ray, or other scanning techniques.
Intermittent catheter	A tube that is manually placed in the urethra and removed several times a day to help you urinate and empty the bladder fully.
Intravenous	Injection into a vein, usually in the arm.
Localised disease	A tumour that is limited to the organ where it started and has not spread.
Locally advanced disease	A tumour that has grown out of the organ where it started into the surrounding tissue or lymph nodes.
Lymph nodes	Small oval-shaped organs that play a role in regulating how the immune system responds.

Malignant tumour	A cancerous growth that grows continuously or in spurts. Malignant tumours can metastasise, which means they spread throughout the body.
Metastatic disease	When a tumour has spread to other organs or lymph nodes.
MRI scan	MRI stands for magnetic resonance imaging. This imaging technique uses strong magnetic fields and radio waves to make images of the body.
Mucosa	A mucous tissue lining.
Neomeatus	A surgically created opening for the urethra in the penile shaft.
Oncologist	A doctor who specialises in the diagnosis, therapy, follow-up, and general care of a person with any type of cancer.
Palliative care	A concept of care with the goal to optimising quality of life if you cannot recover from your illness. It involves physical, psychological, social, and spiritual support.
Pathologist	A doctor who studies tissue, blood, or urine to understand the specific characteristics of diseases. In cancer treatment, the pathologist helps with the diagnosis and classification of tumours.
Perineum	The space between the scrotum and the anus in men and between the vagina and the anus in women.
Primary urethral cancer	A malignant tumour in the urethra.
Prognosis	The likely outcome of health after treatment.
Prostate	This gland produces the fluid that carries semen. It is located in the male lower urinary tract, under the bladder and surrounding the urethra.
Radiation therapy	Cancer treatment that administers x-rays to your body at certain places and intensities to destroy tumour cells.
Recurrence	The return of cancer after treatment and after a period of time during which the cancer could not be detected. Cancer can come back in the place where it was first detected or somewhere else in the body. There is no standard period of time, but most doctors consider it a recurrence if the cancer had not been detected for at least 1 year.
Resection	Removal of tumours from an organ.
Resectoscope	An endoscopic tool used to remove tumour tissue (see Endoscope).
Risk stratification	A tool to determine a treatment pathway based on disease characteristics and personal information like medical and family history or general state of health.

Squamous cell carcinoma	Cancer that specifically affects epithelial cells.
Superficial cancer	A tumour that grows on the tissue surface without growing into deeper layers or adjacent organs. This type of cancer represents an early stage.
Systemic disease	Disease that affects the entire body.
TNM classification	The Tumour Node Metastasis (TNM) classification is an international classification used to classify tumours according to the size and invasiveness of the tumour (T), whether any lymph nodes are affected (N) and if the cancer has spread to any other parts of your body (M).
Tumour grade	The potential of a tumour to grow aggressively.
Tumour stage	This term refers to the extent of a cancer in the body. It is usually based on the size of the tumour and whether the tumour has spread to the lymph nodes or other organs.
Ultrasound	A noninvasive diagnostic tool that can visualise large masses in the body.
Urethra	The tube that carries urine from the bladder out of the body.
Urethrectomy	Removal of the urethra. Removal can be partial or complete.
Urethrocystoscopy	The doctor looks inside your body with a cystoscope inserted through the urethra.
Urinary cytology	The examination of a urine sample for exfoliated cancer cells.
Urinary diversion	A surgical procedure to construct an alternative means of storing and passing urine.
Urinary tract	The organ system that produces and transports urine through and out of the body. It includes two kidneys, two ureters, the bladder, and the urethra. The urinary tract is similar in men and women, but the urethra is longer in men.
Urologist	A doctor who specialises in the health and diseases of the urinary tract and the genitals.
Urothelial carcinoma	Typically occurs within the urinary tract and affects urothelial cells, as opposed to other types of cells in the urinary tract.
Vagina	The muscular tube leading from the external genitals to the cervix of the uterus in women.

This information was last updated in March 2017.

This leaflet is part of a series of EAU Patient Information on primary urethral cancer. It contains general information about primary urethral cancer. If you have any specific questions about your individual medical situation you should consult your doctor or other professional healthcare provider.

This information was produced by the European Association of Urology (EAU) Patient Information Working Group.

The content of this leaflet is in line with the EAU Guidelines.

You can find this and other information on urological diseases at our website: <http://patients.uroweb.org>

Illustrations by:

Mark Miller Art
Missouri, United States of America

Edited by:

Jeni Crockett-Holme
Virginia, United States of America