



## What is Prostate Cancer?

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Prostate cancer is a malignant tumour in the prostate. There are several stages of prostate cancer. Your treatment and experience depend on the specific characteristics of the tumour and the expertise of your medical team.

Most prostate cancers develop slowly and do not cause any symptoms. Fast-growing prostate cancer is less common. The risk of getting prostate cancer increases with age. The average age for diagnosis of prostate cancer is 69.

Prostate cancer is the most common cancer in elderly men in Europe. The survival rate for prostate cancer in Europe is relatively high and is still going up.

### What is the prostate?

The prostate is a gland located in the lower urinary tract, under the bladder and around the urethra. Only men have a prostate. It produces part of the fluid which carries semen. The prostate contains smooth muscles which help to push out the semen during ejaculation.

A healthy prostate is about the size of a large walnut and has a volume of 15-25 millilitres. The prostate slowly grows as men grow older.

### How is prostate cancer treated?

All decisions about the right treatment pathway for you are taken after careful consideration of the classification of the tumour, your prognosis, your general state of health, the availability of treatment options in your hospital, and your personal preferences and values. The most important factor for selecting treatment are the stage and the aggressiveness of the disease.

Prostate cancer can be treated by:

- Radical prostatectomy
- Radiation therapy
- Hormonal therapy
- Active surveillance
- Watchful waiting
- New experimental techniques

### What is the impact of prostate cancer on my life?

Getting diagnosed with cancer has a great impact on your life and the lives of your loved ones. It can cause feelings of anxiety, uncertainty, fear, or even depression. Undergoing treatment for cancer is intense and will affect your work and social life. To find support, approach your doctor or nurse at the

hospital, or your family doctor. They will be able to give you contact information about patient organizations or others who can help you with psychological support, or practical matters such as financial advice.

You may worry about your prognosis, the impact of treatment on your work, social life or financial situation. Most people who have been diagnosed with cancer, or their loved ones, will probably have these worries. You can ask the doctor about psychological support if you feel you need to have someone to talk to. A patient organization can also offer support.

During treatment you will be away from your work. Talk to your boss about the best way for you to get back to work. Perhaps you could work part time, or in a different function.

Discuss with your health care team the possible financial consequences of your treatment. They might be able to direct you to people or places where you can get advice about your economic situation or even financial help.

Cancer treatment can affect your sexuality. You may experience erectile dysfunction after radical prostatectomy. Hormonal therapy can lower your sex drive. Feelings of depression and fatigue can also have a negative effect on your sexual life. It is important that you talk to your partner about your feelings. There are many ways in which you can be intimate. If it is difficult to be sexually active, be near each other, touch each other, give and take hugs, and just sit or lay down close to each other.

You can read more information about the topics discussed here in the various sections of EAU Patient Information on Prostate Cancer. You can find this information at: <http://patients.uroweb.org/prostate-cancer/>

This section offers general information about prostate cancer and situations can vary in different countries. No leaflet can replace a personal conversation with your doctor.

### **This information was updated in January 2015.**

This leaflet is part of EAU Patient Information on Prostate Cancer. It contains general information about this disease. If you have any specific questions about your individual medical situation you should consult your doctor or other professional healthcare provider. No leaflet can replace a personal conversation with your doctor.

This information was produced by the European Association of Urology (EAU) in collaboration with the EAU Section of Uro-Oncology (ESOU), the Young Academic Urologists (YAU), the European Association of Urology Nurses (EAUN), and Europa Uomo.

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>

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