

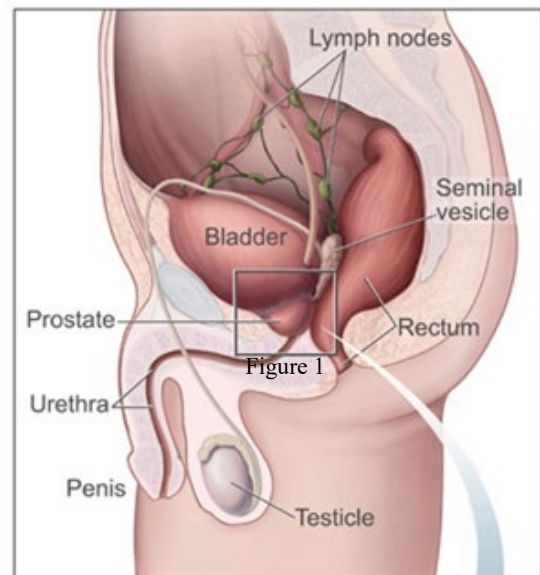
# Prostate Cancer

The prostate is a walnut-sized gland in males (see image). It is located below the bladder and in front of the rectum.

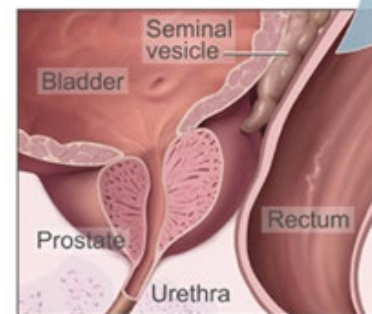
## About Cancer

Cancer affects cells, which are the body's basic unit of life. Sometimes cells keep dividing when new cells are not needed. These cells form a mass of extra tissue, called a growth or tumor. Tumors can be benign or malignant.

- Benign tumors are not cancer. They often do not need to be removed.
- Malignant tumors are cancer. Cells in malignant tumors are abnormal and divide without control or order. These cancer cells can invade and destroy the tissues around them. Cancer cells may also spread from the prostate to other parts of the body.



This shows the prostate and nearby organs.



This shows the inside of the prostate, urethra, rectum, and bladder.

The prostate and surrounding organs  
(Reprinted with permission from the  
National Cancer Institute)

## Prostate Cancer

Prostate cancer happens when malignant cells are found in the prostate. The causes of prostate cancer are unclear. Almost all prostate cancers that begin in the gland cells of the prostate and are called adenocarcinomas. Other cell types occur less often.

## Treatment

Different types of treatment are available for prostate cancer. Some treatments are standard (the currently used treatment) and some are being tested in clinical trials.

## Types of Standard Treatment

### Active Surveillance

Some prostate cancers grow very slowly. Some patients may never need treatment. Instead, their doctors may recommend active surveillance. This approach involves closely monitoring the cancer without treatment. Your doctor will order imaging tests and biopsies on a regular schedule.

## **Surgery**

Surgery to remove the prostate is called prostatectomy. If surgery is your best treatment option, your doctor will discuss the procedure with you.

## **Radiation Treatment**

Radiation treatment uses high-energy x-rays or other types of radiation to kill cancer cells or keep them from growing. Two main types of external beam radiation are commonly used to treat prostate cancer. A type of internal radiation called brachytherapy, works inside the prostate. Ask your radiation doctor about the differences in each type used for your kind of cancer.

## **Medical Treatment**

Medical treatments include hormone therapy and immunotherapy. If needed, your doctor will give you more details.

## **Clinical Trials**

Clinical trials are research studies of new medicines or procedures. Doctors use clinical trials to learn whether a new medicine is safe and effective in patients. Clinical trials testing new prostate cancer treatments are often available through major cancer centers such as MD Anderson.

## **Resources**

### **MD Anderson Cancer Center**

Prostate Cancer web page

<http://www.MDAnderson.org/Patient-and-Cancer-Information/Cancer-Information/Cancer-Types/Prostate-Cancer/index.html>

### **National Cancer Institute**

Prostate Cancer web page

<http://www.Cancer.gov/Types/Prostate>