

Prostate Cancer

Prostate cancer is the 2nd most common type of cancer and the 5th leading cause of cancer deaths among men worldwide. As of 2024, it is estimated that approximately 1 in 8 Canadian men will develop prostate cancer in their lifetime.

In the early stages, prostate cancer may not show any signs or symptoms. Therefore, following screening/testing guidelines is important for effective cancer treatment.

Signs and Symptoms

When prostate cancer presents symptoms or signs, it is typically at the later stage. Some of the symptoms and signs that may show include:

- Weak or interrupted urine flow.
- Urinating often, especially at night.
- Pain or burning during urination.
- Blood in the urine or semen.
- Erectile dysfunction.

These symptoms **may NOT only** be linked to prostate cancer. If you experience any of these symptoms, talk to your doctor.

Once diagnosed, prostate cancer can cause:

- Pain the back, hips, or pelvis that does not go away.
- Unexpected weight loss.
- Fatigue.

Screening/Testing

There are 2 tests that help to detect prostate cancer early, the Prostate-Specific Antigen Test (PSA) or the Digital Rectal Exam (DRE).

1. **PSA Test:** A blood test that indicates when there might be a problem with the prostate.
2. **Digital Rectal Exam:** A doctor checks for abnormalities of the prostate, like lumps.

As the risk of developing prostate cancer increase with age, consider testing if:

1. You are at average risk of developing prostate cancer due to aging, **it is recommended to start testing at age 50.**
2. You are at high risk of developing prostate cancer, consider testing from age 45. This includes those with family history of the disease and Black men (including men of African or Caribbean descent).

If cancer is diagnosed, relieving, and controlling the symptoms remains an important part of the treatment. This may be called symptom management, palliative care, or supportive care. Support the men in your life by encouraging them to visit their doctor to determine when to get tested.

