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Your Health

Men's Health #001 - Prostate

**Featuring
Mr Rajesh Kavia
Consultant Urological Surgeon**



Mr Rajesh Kavia



Consultant Urological Surgeon
BSc(Hons) MB BS(Distinction) FRCSEd(Urol)

He is a Consultant Urological Surgeon currently working in the Northwest London region with over 20 years of experience. He is a highly qualified doctor graduated from Imperial College London (University of London) in 1999. He then underwent his medical training at the Charing Cross & Westminster Medical School, prior to starting out on his research journey at the National Hospital for Neurology and Neurosurgery.

With one of his special interests being kidney stones, he has kindly supervised this month's issue.

It's not uncommon for men to ignore their personal health out of fear of coming across as weak and vulnerable. To all men reading this: you're not invincible and no one needs you to be. Take care of yourself! As well as heart disease, diabetes and stroke, there are a few conditions that are specific to men that we must watch out for.

Prostate Cancer

Prostate cancer if caught early enough, can effectively be treated. Thus, the key is early presentation and early diagnosis. It is the most common cancer in men and is as common in Gujarati men as in other men, but less common than in African or Afro Caribbean men. It is also more common if there is a family member (father, brother uncle – particularly if diagnosed under the age of 50).

What is the prostate?

The prostate is a small gland that men have between the bladder and the urethra (water-pipe). The role of the prostate is to produce fluid that makes up the semen and helps the flow of urine.



What are the symptoms of Prostate cancer?

It can lead to problems with passage of urine, with a slow flow or waking up at night, rarely it can lead to retention of urine (inability to pass urine). Some patients may develop urine infections or blood in the semen. None of these symptoms necessarily mean prostate cancer.

Most prostate cancer however does not have any symptoms and is diagnosed in the early stage by a blood test called the PSA. PSA can increase with prostate cancer, but also urine infections, urinary retention and having a big prostate gland.

Occasionally, prostate cancer can present due to advanced complications, such as bone pain, leg weakness or change in sensation due to cancer spread into bones.

What can you do?

If you are over 45 and have a strong family history, or if you are over 50 you should ask your GP for a PSA (Prostate Specific Antigen) blood test. If it is raised they should organise an urgent referral to the hospital. An MRI scan may be done to view your prostate. This takes around 30-40 minutes lying in a tunnel scanner. If this suggests an abnormality then you will be offered a biopsy.

Treatment

If prostate cancer is diagnosed, then the cancer type and stage will determine treatment. If the cancer is localised then options may include:

- Active surveillance – monitoring the prostate cancer
- Radiotherapy – special rays are focused on the prostate and pelvis to kill any cancer cells.
- Radical Prostatectomy – the prostate gland is removed using keyhole techniques including the robot.

If the cancer has spread beyond the prostate and has metastasised, then options include:

- Hormone therapies
- Chemotherapy – kills cancer cells
- Newer therapies and trials

The prognosis of prostate cancer therefore depends on early diagnosis. So please see your doctor sooner rather than later!

We hope this has helped!
Tame 100 varus na sukhi thav - May you live
happily to 100 years!

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Written by Dr Devan Thanki



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