

Be smart. Get the latest facts about the PSA test.

Then talk about it — with your doctor, partner, family and friends.

Doctors don't think that every man needs the PSA (prostate-specific antigen) test. Learn why — and then decide if it's right for you.

Do you need the PSA test?

Things have changed: Getting the PSA test is no longer automatic during a man's check-ups as he gets older. It's not like getting a colonoscopy or checking your blood pressure.

Now, the smart move is to talk with your doctor and decide together — even if you've already had the test before.

Here's what doctors think

New research has shown that the PSA test doesn't work well as a regular screening test for prostate cancer. It could help some men. But for many, the test has risks without clear benefits.

How to decide if the PSA test is right for you

There's no right or wrong answer. But think about:

- **Your risk.** If you are at high risk for prostate cancer, you might decide to get the test. The downsides of the test may seem worth it.
- **What feels right to you.** Are you the sort of person who wants to get all the tests to be sure? Or are you more laidback about your health?

What increases your risk of prostate cancer?



Race. African American and black men have a 50% higher risk.



Family history. Having a close relative who had prostate cancer raises your risk 2 to 3 times.



Age. The risk of prostate cancer goes up as you get older — especially after age 50.



About the PSA Test

What is it?

The PSA is a blood test. It checks levels of a protein (prostate-specific antigen) made by a man's prostate.

What does the PSA test do?

It won't give you a yes or no answer about prostate cancer. A high PSA level can be a sign of cancer, but usually it's not. The PSA test can't tell the difference. You need a biopsy to know for sure.

What are the benefits?

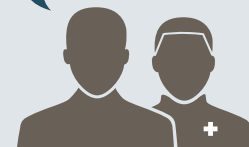
The PSA test may help catch a harmful type of cancer early. Treatment tends to work better the earlier you catch this type of cancer.

What are the risks?

The PSA test can lead to more tests, stress, and overtreatment. Some men wind up getting operations and radiation (maybe with serious side effects) that they could have avoided.

Have more questions about the PSA test?

Talk to your doctor



How can a simple blood test have risks?

It's not the test itself or the needle. It's that the test might not give you a clear answer — so you might need more tests or treatments to be sure. Many have side effects.

A man gets the PSA test.



His result is high. It's probably fine. But it could be a sign of problems.



More tests,
please.



So the doctor orders more tests to be sure, like a biopsy — or several biopsies. These can be stressful and painful.

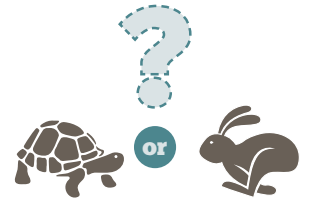
For some men, it ends there — the biopsy is negative.

But for others, the biopsy is positive — the man has cancer.

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It's cancer, but...



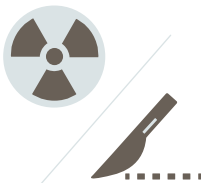
It's probably a slow-growing prostate cancer that won't ever need treatment — most are. But doctors can't always tell if a cancer is harmless or dangerous.

Now the man has two options:



Active Surveillance

He might wait and see if it gets worse. If it does — or if waiting becomes too stressful — he might get treatment anyway.



Treatment

That means he'll have to go through radiation or surgery, even though he might not actually need it.



Then, there's recovery...

Recovery can take a while. And the man might get stuck with side effects. They may not go away.



Impotence
(trouble staying hard during sex)



Incontinence
(leaking urine)



Blood Clots and Heart Attacks

Whether you get the PSA test or not, see your doctor if you have symptoms like:

- Needing to urinate more often than usual
- Getting up during the night a lot to urinate
- Trouble starting or stopping urination
- Weak flow or dribbling
- Blood in your urine

Other conditions besides prostate cancer can cause these symptoms. But always get them checked out.

Still haven't decided whether to get the test?

That's okay. You don't have to make a final decision now. You can wait and think it over.

Learn more about PSA testing at [\[website\]](#)

