

PSA REQUESTS

Men without symptoms over the age of 50 (or over 45 with risk factors) who understand the advantages and disadvantages of a PSA test have the right to have this checked. Please read this information, if you want to have a PSA test after reading this, please call reception to book.

Symptoms

If you have any of these symptoms, please DO NOT book a PSA test, you must book a GP appointment first:

- Weak urine flow
- Urinating more frequently than before
- Getting up at night to urinate
- Straining to start urinating or to finish urinating
- Feeling of not fully emptying your bladder
- Feeling of urgently needing to urinate, or incontinence
- Dribbling at the end of urinating

What is PSA?

PSA stands for Prostate Specific Antigen. It is a protein produced by the prostate (a gland that lies just below the bladder and helps produce semen). PSA levels can be checked with a blood test.

It is normal to have some PSA in your blood if you have a prostate. The level can be raised for many reasons other than prostate cancer.

If you have a close family history of prostate cancer or are of black ethnic origin, you can request a PSA from age 45.

Prostate cancer

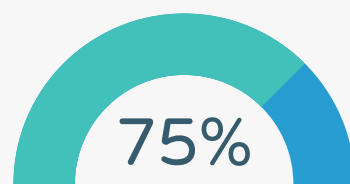
Prostate cancer occurs when a mutation causes prostate cells to grow uncontrollably. It is the second most common cause of death in men in the UK.

Prostate cancer is rare under the age of 50. Factors that increase the risk are:

- History of prostate cancer in a close relative (brother, father) especially if they were under 60 years old when diagnosed.
- Increasing age

Risks continued:

- Being of black ethnic origin doubles the risk.
- There may be an increased risk if your mother or sister had breast cancer.



More than 75% of men with prostate cancer survive for over 10 years.

Slow growing, low-risk prostate cancers are common. These may never give symptoms and may not shorten someone's life.

The PSA level can be affected by:

- Recent urine infection (6 weeks)
- Recent vigorous exercise (48 hours)
- Recent ejaculation (48 hours)
- Some medications (Finasteride and Dutasteride)
- Recent anal sex or prostate stimulation (1 week)
- Prostate biopsy, surgery or urine catheter insertion (6 weeks)

Possible Disadvantages

- You may have a raised PSA without prostate cancer.
- Rarely, men can have prostate cancer with a normal PSA.
- If your PSA is raised it may need to be repeated or you may need to have a prostate biopsy which can lead to side effects (pain, bleeding, infection).
- You may be diagnosed with a slow growing cancer that would never have caused symptoms or shortened your life. This can lead to anxiety.

Possible Advantages

- Possible early detection of high risk, fast growing prostate cancer that could spread and potentially shorten your life without early detection.
- Detection of prostate cancer before symptoms occur.

If your PSA is raised

- We may ask for another blood test to see if it returns to normal.
- We may discuss referring you to a specialist Urologist for further assessment and investigations such as an MRI scan and biopsy.

References:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prostate-specific-antigen-testing-description-in-brief/psa-testing-and-prostate-cancer-advice-for-men-without-symptoms-of-prostate-disease-aged-50-and-over>

https://shop.prostatecanceruk.org/pdf/publication/understanding_the_psa_test-ifm.pdf