

Benign Prostatic Hyperplasia (BPH)

What is prostate enlargement, or BPH?

It's common in man over 50 years to start having problems in urination, the reason could be an enlarged prostate, or BPH. As men get older, their prostate starts growing. As it grows, it compresses the urethra. Since urine move from the bladder through the urethra, the pressure from the enlarged prostate may affect bladder leading to problems in urination.

What are the symptoms of BPH that you can note?

BPH causes urinary problems such as:

- A frequent and urgent need to urinate: urinating much more often than normal, and having a sensation that you need to urinate immediately.
- Getting up to urinate multiple times during the night.
- You find it difficult to start urinating.
- A weak flow of urine with little amount of urine each time you go.
- The emotion that you still have need to go to the bathroom, even when you have just finished urinating.
- You may found small amounts of blood in your urine.

Can you ignore your symptoms?

The symptoms of BPH can be similar to those of prostate cancer. For this reason you should see your doctor. An enlarged prostate can cause back pressure effects in the bladder and kidneys. Bladder stones can also form, and can be painful. Bleeding may also occur. For all these reasons you should see your doctor sooner rather than later.

Can BPH affect your sex life?

BPH can affect sexual activity. A many recent studies showed a relationship between severity of BPH symptoms and a decrease of sexual activity.

Is BPH a sign of cancer?

No, some men with prostate cancer have BPH, but that doesn't mean that the two conditions are the same. Most men with BPH don't develop prostate cancer.

How do you know that you don't have Prostate Cancer?

If you have the symptoms listed above, there is no way to tell you if your symptoms are due to BPH or prostate cancer without physical examination and specific tests, so it is important to visit your physician if you develop any of these symptoms.

How you can test your prostate at home?

- A test for BPH known as PSA test was available in the pharmacy; you can buy it and do it at your house. Ask your pharmacist to explain to you how you can use it.
- PSA is the most useful and meaningful tumor marker known for cancer, prostate infection and BPH. This test is intended to play as a signal to contact your doctor if your blood PSA level is elevated.

How is BPH treated?

Several treatments are available. Work with your doctor to find the one that's best for you.

- **Watchful waiting:** Your doctor may tell you to wait before starting any treatment if your symptoms are not too bad. You will need a checkup each year. You can start treatment soon if your symptoms get worse.
- **Medications:** There are medicines that can relax muscles near your prostate to ease your symptoms and help to reduce the size of prostate.
- **Surgery:** Your doctor may suggest surgery to help urine flow, if nothing else has worked. There are many types of surgery talk with your doctor about them.

Which drug is best for BPH?

These medication prescribed by your doctor, so do not take any medication for BPH before talking with your doctor.

- Alpha 1-blockers (doxazosin, prazosin, tamsulosin, terazosin, and afluzosin) are a class of medications also used to treat high blood pressure. These medications relax the muscles of the bladder neck and prostate which help you to easier urination.
- Finasteride and dutasteride act by reduce the levels of hormones produced by the prostate, increase urine flow rate, reduce the size of the prostate gland, and decrease symptoms of BPH. It may take 3 to 6 months before your symptoms can be seen. The main side effects related to the use of finasteride and dutasteride include decreased sex ability and impotence.

What are the tips that you can do it at home to minimize your symptoms?

- Try "double voiding." Urinate as much as possible, relax for a few moments, and then try to urinate again.
- Worrying about your symptoms can make them worse. So relax before you urinate.
- Take plenty of time to urinate.
- Urinate while sitting down instead of standing.
- Think of other things or read, while you are waiting.
- Do not reduce your fluid intake to avoid urinating.
 - Drink fluids throughout the day.
 - Limit your fluid intake in the evening, and empty your bladder at bedtime.
- Avoid caffeine and alcohol. These substances make your body attempt to get rid of water and can make you urinate more often.
- Check with your doctor or pharmacist about all of the medicines you take, because some medications can make your urination more difficult.
- You may try an herbal remedy for BPH, such as saw palmetto. Before you start any herbal remedy, talk to your doctor about whether it might be helpful.