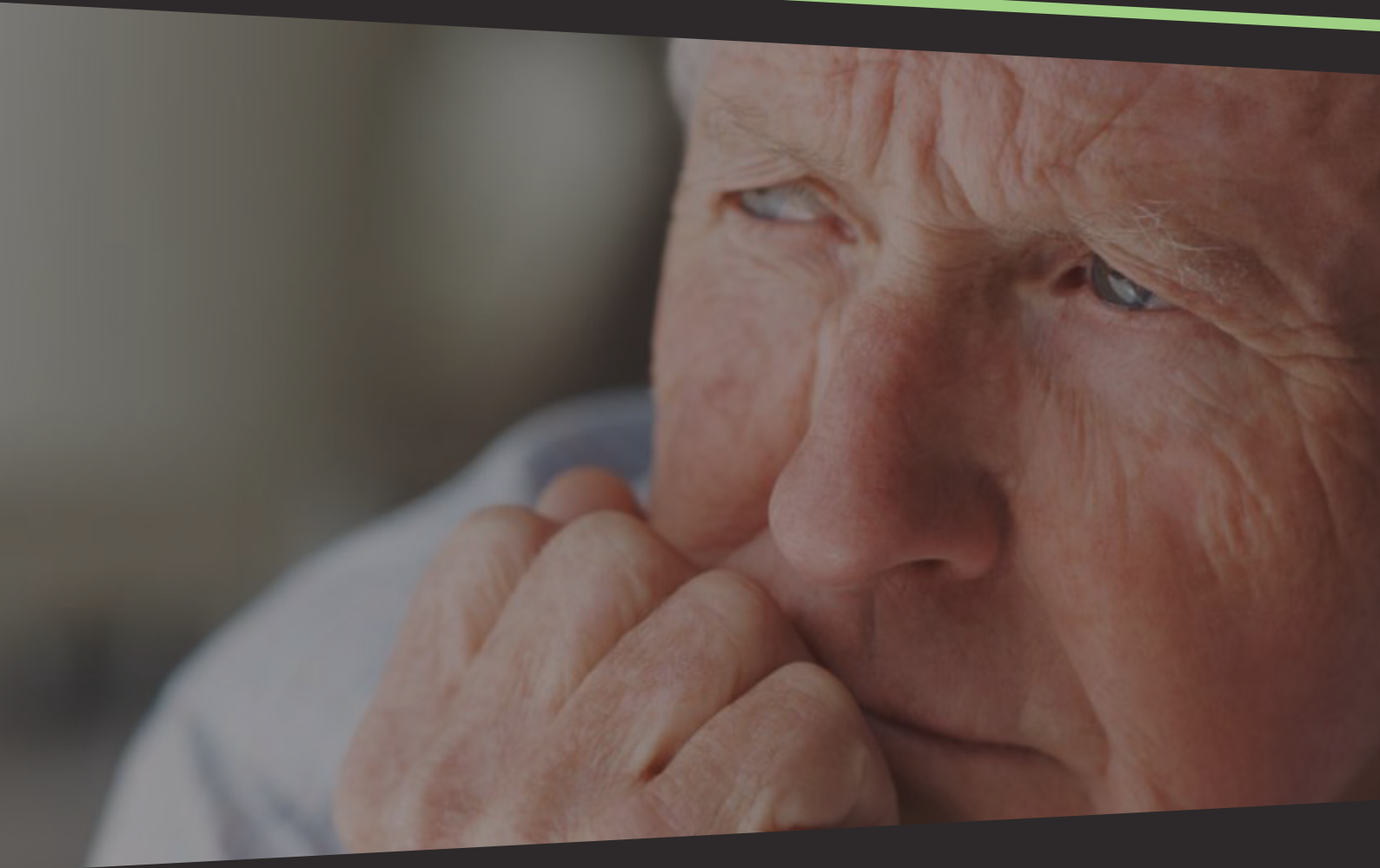


# Prostate Health:

The Uncomfortable Truth Every  
Man In Britain Needs to Know



A direct report to help every man understand  
the facts and realities of prostate problems,  
from *The Good Life Letter*



**Good Life Letter**

Natural health, vitality & wellness

## Introduction:

### **How The Uncomfortable Truth Was Revealed...**

I don't know about you, but until I hit the age of 39 I had no particular reason to think about my own prostate gland, and probably wouldn't have located it correctly in my body. It was something that other people worried about. Older people, right?

It was only after I started getting bladder and testicular pains that I went to the doctor about a week before my 40th birthday and received my first ever prostate examination. I have to say, it wasn't a pleasant experience. At the very moment the doctor donned his rubber glove I felt like I was crossing a threshold into middle age. He put his finger on my prostate and asked, "Is this painful?" which was an interesting question, as I had no idea what a finger pressed against a prostate should feel like. This was the first time I'd ever been aware of the prostate as a real, physical thing inside me.

After blood tests, scans and cancer tests, it turned out that I had something called 'chronic prostatitis' which is an inflammation of the prostate, not caused by bacteria. With a sad smile, the doctor informed me that it was unlikely that any treatment would cure the problem, as it wasn't certain what really caused it in the first place.

It was a shocking thing to hear. Prostatitis is a common problem that affects 15% of men at some point in their lives, and yet most of those men have to put up with 'pain management' as their only solution.

That's when I realised that for a lot of men, it really is up to us to go out and find remedies, lifestyle choices and diets that reduce pain and inflammation.

And that's what this report is about...

### **What we have uncovered about the prostate gland**

My name is Ray Collins, editor of the Good Life Letter. I've spent 15 years in the health advice publishing industry, writing articles and editing books and newsletters. In that time, I've researched and tested hundreds of remedies and products on the market, from back pain wraps to salt pipes, from raw medicinal honey to heated insoles and electromagnetic therapies...

In this report, I'd like to share with you what my team and I have uncovered about prostate disease, including:

- **The 3 most common prostate problems – symptoms, causes, treatments and ways to AVOID THEM**
- **When to see your doctor about your prostate and what to ask**
- **Is diet important? What you should eat and what you should avoid**

This is just one of the many health topics we cover at The Good Life Letter. In our emails and web site we offer a free source of information that helps you understand the causes of many modern diseases and conditions. We then provide you with options for avoiding, treating or reducing the symptoms of these problems.

We believe it's your right to have the choice to try new therapies, herbal remedies and alternative medical breakthroughs, even if the establishment doesn't like it.

In our twice-weekly email bulletins we'll show you what's available, whether or not it works, and what we think. Our unbiased, no-nonsense advice includes:

- **News of important health breakthroughs, alternative therapies and scientific developments across the world** – but looking at the truth BEHIND these stories. As you probably suspect, the media is NOT always to be trusted!
- **Reviews** of the latest health books, diets, nutritional supplements, pain relief gadgets and therapies available in the UK.
- **Advice your doctor probably won't share with you** about weight control, pain relief, anti-ageing, disease protection, good nutrition, natural beauty, and sexual health.

If you don't already subscribe, then please go to [www.goodlifeletter.com](http://www.goodlifeletter.com).

In the meantime, I hope this report gives you some valuable insights into your prostate health.

Best wishes,

Ray Collins

Editor, The Good Life Letter

## 1. The Great British Prostate Problem

Prostate cancer is the most common cancer in men in the UK, accounting for 25% of all new cases. But cancer is not the only problem.

Unfortunately, as soon as prostate problems get mentioned all eyes turn towards cancer and the worry, pain and distress that goes with it – but right at the start of this report it is vital that you understand that cancer is not the inevitable diagnosis for changes in this gland.

As your doctor will be only too pleased to tell you, there are other common conditions which are both treatable and manageable. That's why it's crucial to know your body and spot the signs when something's not quite right.

At some point in their lives, most men will eventually develop some type of prostate condition, including benign prostatic hyperplasia (BPH) and prostatitis. These can range in seriousness and pain levels.

In many cases, diagnosis and treatment can be painless and highly effective as long as the condition is picked up early.

But delays can mean that there are no simple solutions available. There's no magic bullet the doctor can give you if you dwell and worry for too long before going to see them. This is the major reason why many men are forced to live with discomfort, worry and fear.

It is said that men are becoming more aware of their health and will more readily present at their doctors without being forced at gunpoint by their partners and loved ones!

But despite this, two thirds of British men couldn't locate their prostate gland on an anatomical diagram, never mind begin a health programme to keep their prostate healthy. To make matters worse, a lot of men still have a problem with going to the doctor, especially when it involves pain in their sensitive areas. And this is really the biggest barrier to getting an early diagnosis that could mean the difference between a successful treatment and years of distress.

## Putting your head in the sand is NOT the way forward

It's shocking how under-informed many people are about prostate problems, and how many men avoid the issue. This is why we've created this report. The aim is to help you better understand your prostate and spot any early warning signs that something may be wrong.

As a result, you'll be able to diagnose problems earlier, go to your doctor sooner, and ask the right questions when you're there. What's more, you'll be armed with the alternative therapies and remedies that the doctor might not tell you about. Used alongside other treatments, these could significantly alleviate symptoms and help towards not only a healthier prostate but a healthier you.

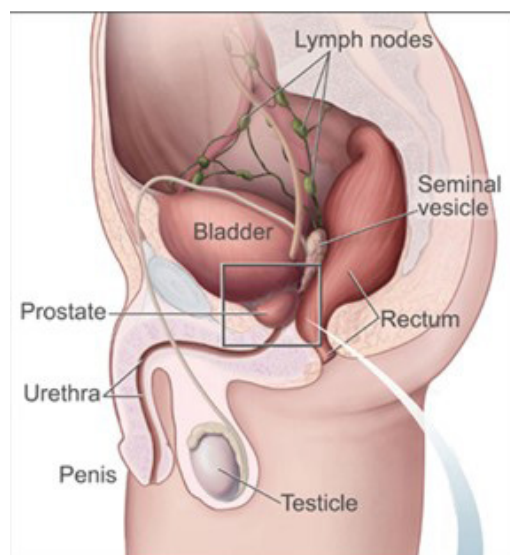
The key is not to be frightened. Fear will only delay treatment. Instead, understand that many prostate problems can be spotted, treated and avoided if you are armed with the right information.

So the first bit of advice is: if you are 40 or over, make sure you have your prostate gland checked by a doctor.

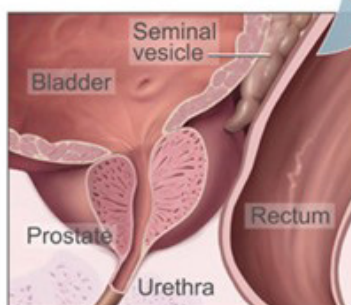
Now let's go right back to basics...

## 2. Prostate: The Basics

The prostate is a walnut-sized gland in the male reproductive system. Its role is to make seminal fluid, which is mixed with sperm to make semen. Your prostate is positioned just below your bladder.



This shows the prostate and nearby organs.



This shows the inside of the prostate, urethra, rectum, and bladder.

When you have a prostate problem, the gland swells from walnut-size to plum-size. As a result, you may experience one or more of the following:

- Weak urine flow
- Needing to go to the toilet more often
- Testicular pain
- Pain after ejaculation
- Pain during urination
- Blood in the urine or semen

If you experience any of these, go to the doctor. Yes, even if you're in your 30s or 40s, it may indicate a prostate problem, or something else of course.

Your doctor may then do one or more of the following:

- Give you a prostate examination to check for swelling.
- Offer you a PSA test to check for prostate cancer. This is a blood test that measures the level of a protein called 'prostate specific antigen' (PSA) which is produced in the prostate gland and found in small amounts in the blood. Three out of four men with a raised PSA level will not have prostate cancer. However, the higher the PSA level, the greater the likelihood of a cancer being present.
- Carry out a blood test and/or semen test to check for infections and anomalies.
- Give you a flow test to monitor the strength of your urine flow and how well your bladder empties.
- Ask you if there's a genetic link. Has your father, grandfather, uncle or brother had prostate cancer? If this is the case, then you have a greater risk of developing the disease.

After all this, you will likely get some kind of diagnosis. Here are the 3 most common prostate problems...

### 3. The Three Common Prostate Problems Explained

#### Prostatitis

##### What is it?

Prostatitis is an inflammation or infection of the prostate gland. It does not raise the risk of getting prostate cancer and affects men of all ages.

Chronic prostatitis is the number-one reason men under the age of 50 visit an urologist. Chronic prostatitis may also be linked to other urinary tract infections.

There are three types of prostatitis: Acute bacterial prostatitis, chronic bacterial prostatitis and chronic nonbacterial prostatitis.

- **Acute bacterial prostatitis** is a sudden bacterial infection marked by inflammation of the prostate. This is the least common form of prostatitis but symptoms are usually severe. Symptoms include a fever, chills, nausea and burning when urinating. Left untreated, this condition can lead to low blood pressure and may become fatal. It is usually treated in hospital with intravenous antibiotics, pain relievers and fluids.
- **Chronic bacterial prostatitis** is a result of recurrent urinary tract infections that have entered the prostate gland. It is thought to exist for years in some men before producing symptoms. The symptoms are similar to acute bacterial prostatitis but are less severe. It's often difficult to find the bacteria in the urine. Treatment includes antibiotics for 4-12 weeks and treatment for pain.
- **Chronic nonbacterial prostatitis** is the most common form of prostatitis accounting for 90% of cases. The condition is marked by urinary and genital pain for at least 3 of the past 6 months. Patients have no bacteria in their urine but may have other signs of inflammation.

##### What causes it?

It's not entirely clear how the prostate becomes infected. One theory is that the bacteria that causes prostatitis may get into the prostate from the urethra by backward flow of infected urine, or stools from the rectum.

In the past, the condition was believed to be a sexually transmitted disease but more recent research suggests that only a small number of cases are passed on through sex. There are certain factors that increase your risk of developing prostatitis however. These include having recently had a medical instrument (such as a urinary catheter) inserted during a medical procedure, engaging in rectal intercourse, having an abnormal urinary tract, having recently had a bladder infection and having an enlarged prostate.

### **What are the symptoms?**

The symptoms of prostatitis vary – you may have no symptoms whatsoever or symptoms may be so sudden and severe that you need emergency care. When present, symptoms include: frequent urges to urinate, difficulty urinating, pain or burning during urination, chills and fever, pain in the abdomen, groin or back, pain during sex and blood in the urine.

### **How is it diagnosed?**

If your doctor suspects that you have prostatitis or another prostate problem, they may refer you to an urologist (a doctor who specializes in diseases of the urinary tract and the male reproductive system) to confirm the diagnosis.

You will then typically undergo a comprehensive examination, including a digital rectal exam. The doctor will be able to evaluate whether the prostate gland is enlarged or tender. Additional tests such as a prostate fluid analysis for signs of infection, transrectal ultrasound, biopsy or voiding studies may also be carried out.

### **How is it treated?**

The treatment of prostatitis varies and is usually individual to which type of prostatitis you have. It's crucial that the correct diagnosis and treatments are carried out. It's also important to make sure your symptoms are not caused by urethritis (inflammation of the urethra) or some other condition that may lead to permanent bladder or kidney damage.

Treatments include: anti-inflammatory medicines with warm baths, antibiotic medicine for infectious prostatitis, pain medications, muscle relaxants, surgical removal of the infected portions of the prostate, stool softeners and prostate massage.

Most men make a full recovery within 2 weeks.

### **How can you prevent it?**

Although sometimes it can't be completely prevented, avoiding spicy foods, caffeinated or acidic drinks and cycling, staying well hydrated, and practicing good general and sexual hygiene have been shown to lessen the chance of developing prostatitis.

## Benign prostatic hyperplasia (BPH)

### What is it?

In many men, the prostate grows with age and as it does, it compresses the urethra tube. The growth in itself is harmless but the problems it presents can be uncomfortable and frustrating.

It occurs most often in men over the age of 60. Up to 30% of men in their 70s have BPH which causes them discomfort.

### What causes it?

The enlargement of the prostate gland compresses the urethra and so obstructs the urine flow.

### What are the symptoms?

Symptoms of BPH include difficulty when urinating, even when the bladder feels full, a weak or interrupted urinary stream, a feeling that the bladder is not completely empty, increased need to urinate, the need to urinate urgently, dribbling of urine after urination and a burning sensation when urinating.

### How is it diagnosed?

A doctor can often diagnose BPH by carrying out the following tests: asking you about your symptoms and filling out a short questionnaire so that they can score the severity of the symptoms, recording your drinking and urination habits over three days, carrying out a rectal examination so they can feel whether the rectum wall is enlarged, taking a urine sample and/or blood test. X-rays including an ultrasound may also be necessary depending on the individual's symptoms.

### How is it treated?

Treatment of BPH is only usually necessary if the symptoms are bothersome or complications are present. If there are only minor symptoms, then a monitoring approach may be suitable.

Your doctor may prescribe you medication if they diagnose BPH. There are two types of medications for this problem:

1) Alpha-blockers: Help to relax muscle fibres within the prostate, reducing the obstruction to the urine flow. They do not reduce the size of the prostate however and side-effects such as dizziness, headaches and drowsiness are common.

2) 5-alpha-reductase inhibitors such as finasteride (Proscar): Inhibit the growth of the prostate and decrease the size of the gland. These medicines can take many months to become effective since they rely on physical shrinking.

Surgery is also an option for BPH. An operation on the prostate will involve the removal of parts of the enlarged tissue. The most common operation is an endoscopic surgical procedure known as transurethral resection of the prostate (TURP).

Surgery has however been linked to side-effects such as erectile dysfunction (in 14% of men after TURP) and urinary incontinence (5%).

Although the benefits of surgery are long-lasting, because only part of the prostate is removed further operations may be needed.

#### **How can you prevent it?**

Although sometimes it can't be completely prevented, eating a low-fat diet with plenty of vegetables, especially onions and garlic, have been shown to lessen the chance of developing prostatitis.

Clinic trials have also shown that raw palmetto, nettle root and pumpkin seeds effectively reduced symptoms caused by an enlarged prostate.

## Prostate cancer

### What is it?

Prostate cancer is a form of cancer which develops in the prostate gland. Early-stage prostate cancer means that cancer cells are found only in the prostate.

Compared with other cancers, prostate cancer grows slowly. This means that it can take 10 to 30 years before a prostate tumour gets big enough to cause symptoms or for your doctor to find it.

Most men who develop prostate cancer will die of something other than the condition itself. Prostate cancer is most common in men aged 65 or over, although younger men can be diagnosed with it. By age 80, more than half of all men have some cancer in their prostate.

### What causes it?

The causes of prostate cancer are largely unknown, and for similarly vague reasons the condition is more common in men of African-Caribbean or African descent and less common in men of Asian descent.

Men with a history of prostate cancer in their family are also at a higher risk of developing it and like with all prostate problems, a healthy lifestyle is advised.

### What are the symptoms?

Men with early prostate cancer are unlikely to have any symptoms, as these only occur when the cancer is large enough to put pressure on the urethra (the tube that drains urine from the bladder).

However, symptoms can mirror BPH – the condition we talked about earlier, so – difficulty passing urine, passing urine more frequently than usual, pain when passing urine, blood in the urine.

Secondary cancer in the bones, lungs, lymph nodes and liver can also occur (when the cancer has spread from the prostate to other areas of the body) which is why it is crucial to catch prostate cancer at an early stage.

### How is it diagnosed?

Prostate cancer is diagnosed through a series of tests – most commonly a urine test, blood test and digital rectal examination. An MRI scan may also be necessary. Your doctor will refer you to an urologist if further investigation is needed.

### How is it treated?

Prostate cancer is most often found in early stages. When it is found early, there are a number of treatment choices available. The outlook for prostate cancer is generally good. This is because, unlike other cancers, prostate cancer usually develops very slowly. A man can live for decades without having any symptoms or needing any treatment. Typical treatments include removing the prostate, hormone therapy and radiotherapy.

If the cancer spreads from the prostate to other parts of the body (metastasis), typically the bones, it cannot be cured and treatment is focused on prolonging life and relieving symptoms. Approximately 10,000 men die from prostate cancer in the UK each year.

All treatment options carry the risk of side effects including: loss of libido, inability to obtain or maintain an erection and urinary incontinence. For this reason, many men choose to delay treatment until there is a significant risk that the cancer might spread.

Remember – there are a lot of treatment choices, make the one that's right for YOU. Get the opinions of several doctors and take your time to research your choices and consider your partner too.

There are organisations and support groups out there and it IS possible to live a full life after being diagnosed with prostate cancer. Treatment choices will depend on many factors and your prostate cancer risk group will be taken into consideration. Doctors use details about your cancer to place you into a low, medium or high-risk group.

Early stage prostate cancer patients are typically offered the following treatment options. Each come with their own pros and cons so be sure to research them thoroughly before deciding:

- **Active surveillance**

Closely watching for any sign that the cancer may be growing or changing. This is a good option for early-stage patients as it means you can avoid the side effects and costs of treatments without shortening your life. You can change your mind on this treatment and decide to have a different treatment at any time.

- **Surgery**

There are different types of surgery available for men with prostate cancer in good health. These include open prostatectomy (removing the prostate through a single cut in the abdomen); laparoscopic surgery (using a laparoscope which is a long slender tube to see and remove the prostate); perineal prostatectomy (removing the prostate through an incision between your scrotum and anus).

- **Radiation therapy**

Radiation therapy uses high doses of radiation energy to treat cancer. This is the best treatment for older men or men who have other health problems.

### Questions to consider

The following questions are common discussions that you may want to think over yourself or talk through with your partner.

Talk through the options with your doctor too – ask questions, know your health history and get a 2nd or even 3rd opinion for ultimate peace of mind.

### How can you prevent it?

Cut down on meat: prostate cancer – a hormone-based disease – may be strongly linked to the consumption of meat which contains higher levels of hormone-disrupting chemicals. Try to eat meat no more than three times a week. It's best to eat white meat, and lean cuts of red meat with equal portions of fish. Opt for hormone-free organic cuts where possible.

- Don't fry food. Diets which are high in dairy products – milk, cheese, butter and saturated animal fats – are also associated with a higher incidence of prostate cancer.
- Avoid trans-fats, found in margarine, vegetable shortening and processed vegetable oils. If you are overweight, start a diet to reduce your risk.
- Eat more fruit. Eat five to nine daily servings of organic fresh fruit and vegetables. Eat plenty of rich red tomato sauces. Try to include soya in your diet – soya milk, tofu or soya yoghurts. These are all high in antioxidants, which protect our cells against the damaging effects of free radicals and can help prevent cancers.
- Take vitamins. Recommended daily supplements for prostate protection include: vitamins A, C, D and selenium and flaxseed oil.
- Stop smoking. Giving up cigarettes will also protect your zinc levels.
- Avoid using garden fertilisers and pesticides. Many of these contain hormone-disrupting chemicals.
- Exercise. Because very little research has been conducted into prostate cancer, the power of exercise, though known to be beneficial in boosting the body's immune system, is still largely uncertain. What scientists do know is that exercise can prevent cancer because it enhances natural immunity by improving circulation, blood pressure and the efficiency and strength of the heart. It also improves the antioxidant defences of our cells, which can help to counter the potentially damaging effects of oxidants, and which can lead to the genetic mutations that lie behind the development of cancers.

## 4. Healthy Approaches to Prostate Problems

### Your sex life...

Prostate fluid is a main ingredient of semen. When a man ejaculates, the prostate fluid expels. This action helps the prostate gland to 'detox'. Expelled prostate fluid brings away many waste and toxic materials. After the fluid is expelled, more fluid produces. This is like 'washing' the gland.

Many prostatitis sufferers may experience sexual dysfunction, including ED, premature ejaculation, losing gratification and so on.

Here are some tips...

- If you're an acute prostatitis sufferer, avoid sex till your treatment ends.
- For chronic prostatitis sufferers, don't have too much sexual intercourse. It is suggested to control the frequency between 1-3 times per week.
- Before and after having sex, wash your perineum area (the bit between the anus and the scrotum). A hip bath with warm water helps to eliminate the inflammation.
- If you feel a pain with ejaculation, restrain from having sex.

Whatever happens, don't give up sex altogether. Since the prostate gland plays a role in the sexual response cycle, it's important for it to release seminal fluid (semen) and some medical professionals recommend ejaculation for relieving prostate distress and as a preventative measure for such conditions.

If you are healthy, you produce a certain amount of sperm and semen in a regular period of time. Some men make a lot rather quickly. Some men take a lot longer to make a full supply. Once your body has created a full supply of semen and sperm (specific to each individual) it needs to release it. That is when you get aroused. After you ejaculate, your cycle starts again.

The length of that cycle is determined by genetics, age, what you eat, and general health. If you are healthy and enjoy sex within your own personal natural rhythm, you can enjoy sex long into your 80s and 90s without complications.

### Your diet...

Try to eat six portions of brightly coloured fruit and vegetables a day. Include three portions of oily fish a week, such as salmon, herrings, mackerel or sardines, which are rich in vitamin D and essential fatty acids, omega-3 and omega-6.

There is evidence that selenium, a trace mineral, helps lower the risk of prostate cancer by combating cell damage. Selenium is found in broccoli, Brazil nuts, seafood, asparagus, brown rice and onions.

Mediterranean men have a lower prostate cancer rate and this is believed to be down to a diet rich in fruit and vegetables, garlic, olive oil, fish and tomatoes which contain a bright red pigment called lycopene, a powerful carotenoid antioxidant, which helps to repair damaged cells.

### Your supplements...

A supplement can help.

For instance, Androlistica from the leading French herbal remedy company Holistica (available from the [www.goodlifeletter.com](http://www.goodlifeletter.com)), is designed especially to relieve the symptoms of an enlarged prostate gland, putting an end to discomfort and night-time trips to the toilet. Many men also find that it increases vitality, feelings of well-being and sex drive.

### Your weight...

There is also an established link between obesity and cancer – putting on those extra cuddly pounds around your waist doubles your risk of dying of cancer.

Reduce your intake of the foods you know are bad for you (even if they taste soooo good!) and try to replace saturated fats with monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats. Saturated fats are found in meat, some margarines, crisps, chips, and many processed foods.

Lower salt intake and watch your alcohol intake. Avoid too much cured meat such as smoked dishes, or processed hams, as they may contain carcinogens, a substance that may promote or aggravate cancer.

### Your drink...

Japanese and Chinese men have very low levels of prostate cancer and the fact that they regularly drink green teas is thought to be one reason why. This is because it's rich in polyphenols, which have antioxidant properties.

Alcohol and fizzy drinks are rich in sugar, which can pile on the pounds. Instead, you should try to drink six to eight glasses of water each day to help flush out the kidneys and keep the body hydrated.

### Your fitness...

Exercise helps to balance hormone levels, prevent obesity and boost the immune system. And it's never too late – studies have shown that exercise is still beneficial for men who have been diagnosed with prostate cancer and are receiving treatment for it.

But this doesn't mean having to join a gym or go to regular exercise classes. Try a brisk 20 minute walk every day or get into gardening and spend an hour a day outside digging, sweeping and mowing.

## 5. Where to find information and support groups:

An informative site about prostate problems:

<http://www.prostateproblems.org.uk>

NHS prostate resources:

<http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/Prostatehealth/Pages/knowyourprostate.aspx>

Prostate problems in the media:

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/sponsored/health/mens-health-concernstena/8541001/Mens-health-concerns-Prostate-problems.html>

Prostate cancer support association:

<http://www.prostatecancersupport.info>

The British Prostatitis Support Association

[www.bps-assoc.org.uk](http://www.bps-assoc.org.uk)

The Prostate Cancer Charity

<http://www.prostate-cancer.org.uk>

Cancer Research UK

<http://www.cancerresearchuk.org>

This advice is purely informative and was not written by a medical professional. If you are at all concerned about your health, seek professional medical advice.