

Prostate Cancer

Prostate cancer often does not cause any symptoms in the early stages. There are also other health problems can show very similar signs and symptoms.

Signs & Symptoms of Prostate Cancer

- ◆ A need to urinate (pee) frequently, especially at night
- ◆ Difficulty starting urination or holding back urine
- ◆ Inability to urinate
- ◆ Weak or interrupted flow of urine
- ◆ Pain or burning when urinating
- ◆ Painful ejaculation
- ◆ Blood in urine or semen
- ◆ Frequent pain or stiffness in the lower back, hips, or upper thighs



These symptoms may be caused by prostate cancer or by other, less serious health problems, such as BPH (an enlargement of the prostate).

People who are most at risk for prostate cancer are:

- ◆ Men over the age of 55 (average age at diagnosis is 72)
- ◆ Black men get prostate cancer more often than white men
- ◆ Men who have had a father or brother with prostate cancer
- ◆ Men with a high fat diet (eating lots of fruits and vegetables decreases the risk)
- ◆ Farmers or workers that have been exposed to metal cadmium during welding, electroplating, or making batteries
- ◆ Workers in the rubber industry also appear to develop prostate cancer more often

How prostate cancer is diagnosed:

- ◆ Digital rectal exam - the doctor inserts a gloved, lubricated finger into the rectum and feels the prostate through the rectal wall to check for lumps or hard areas
- ◆ Blood tests - blood is drawn so that measures of specific substances (PSA & PAP) can be found. If the substances are higher than normal they *may* point to cancer
- ◆ Urine test - urine is checked for blood or infection
- ◆ Transrectal ultrasonography - a probe is inserted into the rectum that sends out sound waves, which bounce off the prostate. Then a computer uses the echoes to create a picture.
- ◆ Intravenous pyelogram - a series of x-rays of the organs in the urinary tract
- ◆ Cystoscopy - a doctor looks into the urethra (the tube that carries urine out of the body) and the bladder (the organ which stores urine) through a thin lighted tube
- ◆ Biopsy - if cancer is suspected from any of the above tests, a doctor will remove a small piece of tissue from the prostate, usually with a hollow needle. **THIS IS THE ONLY WAY TO KNOW WITH 100% CERTAINTY IF THE TISSUE HAS CANCER CELLS IN IT.**

Help is out there...

If you have any questions or concerns you can contact the Granville-Vance District Health Department at:

919-693-2141 or 252-492-7915