

Questions to Ask Your Doctor about Prostate Cancer

<http://www.urologychannel.com/patient-information-prostate-cancer/index.shtml>

Prostate cancer treatment depends on a number of factors, including the patient's age and overall health, the stage of the disease, and whether the condition is confined to the prostate gland or has spread (metastasized). Here are some questions to ask your urologist or oncologist about prostate cancer treatment. **Print this page**, check the questions you would like answered, and take it with you to your appointment.

Questions to Ask for Men Recently Diagnosed with Prostate Cancer

- What stage and grade is my prostate cancer?
- What is the prognosis for my type of prostate cancer?
- What is my current prostate-specific antigen (PSA) level? At what rate has my PSA level risen?
- What is my Gleason score? Does this score indicate that aggressive treatment is likely required to treat my condition?
- Will you perform additional testing to determine if my prostate cancer has spread?
- What types of treatment are available to treat my prostate cancer?
- What treatment(s) do you recommend? Why do you recommend this type of treatment?
- What are the benefits of this treatment? What are the potential side effects? Might I experience urinary complications (e.g., incontinence) or impotence (erectile dysfunction)?
- How will severe side effects be managed?
- Which additional health care providers will be involved in my treatment?
- What steps can I take to improve the success of my treatment (e.g., lifestyle changes)?
- How often will my condition be monitored during treatment? What type of testing will be conducted to determine if my therapy is working?
- Next appointment:** Date: _____ Time: _____

- Do you recommend that I participate in a clinical trial?
 - Can you suggest additional resources for information that might be helpful?
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Questions to Ask about Radiation Therapy for Prostate Cancer

- Do you recommend any other treatments, such as hormone therapy (also called anti-androgen therapy, androgen deprivation, or androgen suppression), before I begin radiation?
- Will I receive external radiation therapy (XRT) or brachytherapy to treat my prostate cancer? Why do you recommend this type of treatment?
- What are the potential short-term and long-term side effects of radiation therapy for prostate cancer?
- Who should I contact if I experience severe side effects or complications during treatment?
Telephone number to call:
- What is the success rate for this therapy in treating cancer and preserving normal function (e.g., ability to achieve erection, urinary and bowel continence)?
- How often will I receive radiation treatments? How long will each treatment take?
- How can I expect to feel during treatment? Can I continue with my normal daily activities?
- How will my prostate cancer be monitored during radiation therapy?
- Will prostate specific antigen (PSA) kinetics, such as prostate specific antigen doubling time (PSA-DT), or other tests (PSA velocity) be used to predict my risk for metastasis following treatment?
- What type of follow-up care will I receive after radiation therapy for prostate cancer?

Questions to Ask about Prostate Cancer Surgery

- What type of surgery will be performed? Why am I a good candidate for this procedure?
- What are the benefits and potential side effects of this surgery?
- Will a nerve-sparing technique be used to help preserve urinary continence and my ability to achieve erection?
- About how many times have you performed this procedure?
- If cancer outside of the prostate gland is detected during surgery, what will be the course of action?
- How should I prepare for surgery? Should I store blood prior to the procedure?
- What kind of anesthesia will be used? How long will the procedure take?
- What types of complications may develop during or after surgery? Who should I contact if I have questions or experience severe side effects?

Telephone number to call:

- How long will I be in the hospital following prostate cancer surgery?
- What can I expect after surgery? About how long will it take before I am able to resume normal daily activities and sexual activity?
- Follow-up appointment:** Date: _____ Time: _____
- How often will my condition be monitored following surgery? What types of tests will be performed? Will I receive regular bone scans or other imaging procedures?
- Will prostate specific antigen (PSA) kinetics, such as prostate specific antigen doubling time (PSA-DT), or other tests (PSA velocity) be used to predict my risk for metastasis following surgery?

Questions to Ask about Hormone Therapy for Prostate Cancer

- Will I have hormone therapy prior to radiation or surgery to help shrink the tumor?
- If I am unable to have radiation or surgery, prostate cancer recurs after radiation or surgery, or prostate cancer spreads (metastasizes) is hormone therapy an option?
- What type of hormone therapy do you recommend? Do you recommend early or delayed, continuous or intermittent hormone therapy?
- What are the most common side effects of anti-androgens, luteinizing hormone-releasing hormone (LHRH) analogs, and luteinizing hormone-releasing hormone antagonists?
- How will my condition be monitored during hormone therapy?
- Might surgical removal of the testicles (orchiectomy) be necessary?
- If orchiectomy is performed, may I choose to have a testicular prosthesis?
- If hormone therapy is not successful, is chemotherapy an option? Why or why not?
- If I will be receiving chemotherapy, will you perform laboratory tests (e.g., molecular profiling) to determine which drugs might work best on my specific cancer?

Notes/Additional Information