

## Questions to Ask Your Doctor about BPH

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

Benign prostatic hyperplasia (BPH), also called benign prostatic hypertrophy, is a common condition in men over the age of 60. Although the exact cause for BPH is unknown, hormone changes associated with aging may contribute to the condition. Symptoms of enlarged prostate include frequent urination (especially at night), urinary urgency (strong, sudden need to urinate), and difficulty urinating (e.g., weak, interrupted urine stream).

Men who experience symptoms of benign prostatic hyperplasia should speak with a urologist or other qualified health care provider. Although benign prostatic hyperplasia is not related to prostate cancer, symptoms of BPH may be similar to those caused by cancer. Also, severe cases of BPH can lead to serious complications, such as acute urinary retention (inability to urinate), recurrent urinary tract infection (UTI), and urinary incontinence.

Here are some questions to ask your doctor about benign prostatic hyperplasia. **Print this page**, check off the questions you would like answered, and take it with you to your appointment. By asking the right questions, you can work with your doctor to develop a BPH treatment plan, learn to manage your BPH symptoms and reduce your risk for complications, and assess your risk for prostate cancer.

### Questions to Ask Your Doctor about BPH/Enlarged Prostate

- What is the function of the prostate gland?
- Why do you suspect that I have an enlarged prostate?
- Do you recommend that I see a urologist who specializes in conditions that affect the prostate? Why or why not?
- Might my symptoms be related to another medical condition, such as prostatitis or prostate cancer?
- What types of exams and tests will be used to rule out other conditions and diagnose BPH?
- How should I prepare for these diagnostic tests?
- Will someone contact me or should I call for the results of my tests?

**Telephone number to call:**

**Date to call:**

- Who will explain my test results to me?
- Am I at increased risk for complications associated with BPH? What are the signs of these complications?
- What should I do if I my BPH symptoms worsen or I experience complications?

**Telephone number to call:**

- Do you recommend watchful waiting? Why or why not?
- What kind of BPH treatment do you recommend? Why do you recommend this treatment?
- What are the potential benefits, risks, and complications of this treatment for enlarged prostate?
- Will medication be used to treat my condition? If so, which drugs will be prescribed?
- What are the common side effects associated with these medications?
- If these medications are unsuccessful, might I benefit from a minimally invasive procedure, such as laser therapy or microwave therapy, to treat my BPH? Why or why not?
- What do minimally invasive procedures for BPH involve?
- Might I require surgery to treat my condition? If so, what might this procedure involve?
- How should I prepare for treatment? Will I be hospitalized, require a catheter, or need special care following the procedure?
- How will my condition be monitored during and after BPH treatment?
- How often will I have physical examinations, including digital rectal exam (DRE), and PSA tests?
- Do you recommend lifestyle changes or alternative (naturopathic) therapies? Why or why not?

- If so, what does this surgery involve?
  - Can you suggest additional resources for information about benign prostatic hyperplasia?
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**Notes/Additional Information**