

“ Having no symptoms doesn't necessarily mean nothing is happening in the nether region! Regularly consulting a doctor could ultimately save your life. ”

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# glossary



**Acute prostatitis** – inflammation of the prostate gland that comes on suddenly and is usually caused by bacteria. Symptoms similar to a bladder infection and can be treated with antibiotic medication.

**Alpha-blockers** – drugs that relax muscle in the arteries and urinary tract. Alpha-blockers relax the muscles of the bladder and prostate in treatment for benign prostatic enlargement to improve urine flow, and are often also used to lower blood pressure.

**Anaesthetic** – certain type of medication used to relieve pain and reduce feeling during surgery. An anaesthetic can be:

- **Local** – when you lose feeling to the part of your body where the medication is injected, but you remain awake. E.g. a needle prior to having dental work;
- **Spinal** – anaesthetic medication is injected into the spinal canal and you lose all feeling from your waist down; or

- **General** – administered for more major procedures where you lose consciousness and wake up when the procedure is over.

**Androgens** – male sex hormones. The most active male hormone, **testosterone** is produced by the testicles.

**Anti-androgens** – drugs which slow the growth of prostate cancer by blocking the action of the male hormone, testosterone.

**Benign** – non-cancerous/  
non-malignant.

**Benign Prostatic Enlargement (BPE)** – non-cancerous enlargement or growth of the prostate gland. This increase in the number and/or size of cells is also known as benign prostatic hyperplasia or benign prostatic hypertrophy, and known collectively as BPH.

**Biopsy** – removal of tiny pieces of tissue. Performed when cancer is suspected, with the cells from the tissue analysed under a microscope to determine if they are cancerous.

**Bladder Neck Incision (BNI)**  
– See **Transurethral Incision of the Prostate**.

**Bone scan** – a type of X-ray used to locate cancerous activity in bones. A low-dose radioactive chemical is injected into a vein and the X-rays trace its path through the body. This chemical settles in parts of the bones that are abnormal, such as areas of cancer and the X-ray images identify these as ‘hot spots’.

**Brachytherapy** – a form of prostate **radiotherapy** that involves the direct insertion of radioactive seeds or rods into the prostate.

**Bulbourethral glands (or Cowper’s glands)** – two pea-sized glands on each side of the prostate gland, forming part of the male reproductive system. These glands secrete a mucous fluid that is added to **semen**.

**Cancer** – abnormal cells which multiply without control. Cancer cells can spread through the blood stream and lymphatic circulation to other parts of the body.

**CAT (CT) Scan – computer assisted tomogram.** A series of detailed pictures taken in a circle around the body produced by a computer linked to an X-ray machine. Also called computerised axial tomography.

**Catheter** – a hollow, flexible tube through which fluids can be passed into or drained from the body. During and following some prostate disease treatments, a catheter is used that runs from your bladder, along the inside of your penis to the outside of your body where it joins to a bag.

**Chemotherapy** – the treatment of any disease by chemical medication. Commonly it is loosely used as an expression when anti-cancer (**cytotoxic**) medications are used.

**Chronic prostatitis** – inflammation of the prostate gland that is usually caused by bacteria. Continuously recurs; symptoms can be treated with antibiotic medication.

**Clinical staging** – staging or rating of prostate cancer determined by a **digital rectal examination (DRE)**.

**Complementary therapies** – non-traditional interventions used to treat or cure chronic and acute illness and manage pain. Often used alongside traditional treatments.

**Cystitis** – infection or inflammation of the bladder.

**Cystoscope** – a thin tube with a light and an eyepiece attached to it that is inserted into the urethra and used to look inside the bladder.

**Cystoscopy** – a procedure in which an instrument (**cystoscope**) is inserted into the urethra under local anaesthetic, to view the bladder and prostate.

**Cytotoxic** – special medications used to kill cancerous cells in the body. Cytotoxic means ‘toxic to cells’.

**Day procedure** – a surgical procedure performed without the need for the patient to remain in hospital overnight.

**Digital Rectal Examination (DRE)** – a simple test where a doctor inserts a gloved, lubricated finger into the rectum to examine the back passage and feel the prostate gland.

**Doubling time** – the time taken for the **PSA (Prostate Specific Antigen)** to double, for example from 4 to 8 ng/mL. This is a measure of how fast a cancer is growing and can also be used to predict cancer recurrence after treatment.

**Dry ejaculation** – after some treatments for prostate disease a man may achieve orgasm, but produce no fluid. This is because the fluid flows back into the bladder instead of out through the penis. Also known as **retrograde (reverse) ejaculation**.

**Ejaculate** – see **Semen**.

**Ejaculatory duct** – tube that semen passes through at time of **ejaculation**.

**Epididymis** – a long tube that lies on top of each testicle and functions as a reservoir for sperm produced by the testes.

**Erectile dysfunction** – inability to achieve and maintain an erection firm enough for penetration. Also called **impotence**.

**External Beam Radiotherapy (EBR)** – a form of radiotherapy where the prostate is targeted with high-energy X-rays from outside the body.

**Free to total PSA ratio** – In both healthy men and those with prostate cancer, the **prostate specific antigen (PSA)** in the bloodstream ‘latches’ onto protein. In men with benign prostatic enlargement (BPE), there tends to be more ‘free’ or ‘unbound’ PSA. This test compares the ratio of unbound PSA to total PSA in the bloodstream.

**Gleason score** – a way of grading cancer cells. Low grade cancers (Gleason score 2, 3, 4) are slower growing than high grade (Gleason scores 8, 9, 10) cancers. The pathologist identifies the two most common tissue patterns and grades them from 1 (least aggressive) to 5 (most aggressive). The Gleason score is given as two numbers added together to give a score out of ten. (For example,  $3 + 4 = 7$ ). The first number is the most common pattern seen under the microscope and the second number is the next most common.

**Grade** – a score that describes how abnormal the cancer cells look, and consequently how aggressive or fast-growing the cancer is likely to be. The most commonly used grading system is the **Gleason score**, which ranges from 2–10.

**Hormone** – a natural chemical substance that is formed in one part of the body, travels through the blood, and affects the function of cells elsewhere in the body.

**Hormone therapy** – in prostate cancer, treatment with drugs that prevent the effect of **testosterone** in the body in order to slow or stop the growth of prostate cancer.

**Hot flush** – a sudden rush of heat to the face and neck, and sometimes the chest and back. Hot flushes can occur in men receiving hormone therapy for prostate cancer.

**Immune system** – the system that protects the body against an attack of any infective or allergic disease.

**Impotence** – inability to achieve and maintain an erection of the penis, sufficient to engage in sexual intercourse. Also called **erectile dysfunction**.

**Incontinence** – inability to control urine or faeces passing. Incontinence may be due to a wide range of medical conditions and may occur after some treatments for prostate disease.

**Inflammation** – a protective response of the body’s tissues to injury or irritation, characterised by redness, heat, swelling and pain.

**Intermittent therapy** – a non-continuous form of hormone therapy for prostate cancer, where treatment starts and stops repeatedly.

**Laparoscopic surgery** – surgery performed using only small cuts (“keyhole surgery”) and telescopic instruments.

**Laser therapy** – laser fibres are passed through the urethra into the prostate gland to vaporise obstructing prostate tissue. Relieves pressure on the urethra and restores a freer flow of urine.

**Libido** – sex drive.

**Localised prostate cancer** – cancer at an early stage and which has not spread beyond the prostate gland.

**Lower Urinary Tract Symptoms (LUTS)** – symptoms related to the flow or passing of urine, such as poor stream, frequent urination, needing to get up at night two or more times to urinate, incontinence and incomplete emptying of the bladder.

**Luteinising Hormone (LH)** – produced by the pituitary gland in the brain and acts on the testes to produce the principle male hormone, testosterone.

**Luteinising Hormone Releasing Hormone (LHRH)** – stimulates the pituitary gland in the brain, which sends a message (luteinising hormone) to the testes to produce testosterone.

**Luteinising Hormone Releasing Hormone (LHRH) Agonist** – a substance that resembles LHRH, which controls the production of sex hormones. The LHRH agonists keep the testicles from producing hormone (testosterone).

**Lymph nodes (glands)** – small oval shaped nodes situated along the blood vessels. Lymph nodes prevent entrance of infections and other harmful material entering the bloodstream.

**Male reproductive organs**

– collective term for the scrotum, testes, penis, spermatic cord, seminal vesicles, prostate and bulbourethral glands.

**Malignant** – cancerous.

**Margin positive** – after surgery to remove the prostate, if cancer cells are present at the cut edge (margin) of the removed prostate, it is termed ‘margin positive’.

**Medical oncologist** – a specialist in the treatment of cancer using chemotherapy.

**Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS)** – a book that lists the professional services rendered by medical professionals that have been approved for Australian Government Funding, and are therefore paid by the Department of Veterans’ Affairs.

**Metastasis** – the spread of cancer away from the part of the body where it began.

**Milking (urethral)** – an action performed to empty the reservoir of urine not passed after passing urine. The small amount of urine is expressed or “milked” by placing fingers of one hand several

centimetres behind the scrotum and bringing them upward and forward towards the base of the penis.

**MRI – Magnetic Resonance Imaging.** A magnet is linked to a computer used to create pictures of areas inside the body.

**Nodules** – small lumps.

**Nerve-sparing operation** – a specialised technique for prostate cancer surgery that aims to preserve the nerves needed for erections.

**Oncologist** – a doctor specialising in the diagnosis, treatment and management of cancers.

**Orchidectomy** – surgical removal of the testicle(s).

**Osteoporosis** – thinning of the bones making them weaker and more likely to break.

**Palliative care** – treating the symptoms so the patient feels better, without an effect on the underlying cause of the problem. Palliative care is centred on achieving the best possible quality of life for the person and their family.

**Pelvic** – area of the body located below the waist and surrounded by the hip and pubic bones.

**Penis** – male reproductive organ that consists of a body, or shaft that starts deep inside the body and extends externally to the end of the penis at the glans.

**Perineal (perineum)** – area of body between the anus and the scrotum.

**Pituitary** – part of the brain that produces hormones that stimulate the testicles to produce **testosterone** (male hormone).

**Post micturition dribbling**  
– dribbling after urination.

**Potency** – the ability to have and maintain erections firm enough for penetration.

**Prognosis** – the course and likely outcome of a disease.

**Prostate disease** – the term used to describe any medical problems involving the prostate gland.

**Prostate gland** – part of the male reproductive organs; lies under the bladder and surrounds the urethra. The prostate gland secretes a milky

fluid that is added to **semen** during ejaculation.

**Prostate Specific Antigen (PSA) blood test** – a test which examines a protein in the blood, specific to the prostate. The level of PSA usually rises in men who have benign enlargement of the prostate gland, an infection of the prostate gland or cancer of the prostate.

**Prostatectomy** – removal of all or part of the prostate gland. There are two main types:

- Transurethral prostatectomy (TURP) - removal of part of the tissue surrounding the urethra which may be blocking the flow of urine.
- Radical prostatectomy - removal of all of the prostate and the seminal vesicles.

**Prostatitis** – infection/inflammation of the prostate gland, usually caused by bacteria.

**Radical prostatectomy** – surgical removal of the entire prostate gland including the capsule, and the seminal vesicles.

**Radical surgery** – surgery aimed at removing all of the cancer.

**Radiation therapy** – treatment with energy rays or waves from X-rays or other sources to injure or destroy cancer cells. Also called **radiotherapy**.

**Radiotherapist** – a specialist doctor who uses X-rays and radioactive substances to diagnose and treat diseases.

**Rectum** – the last part of the large intestine leading to the outside of the body (anus).

**Remission** – term used when, after treatment, there is no sign of any cancer.

**Resectoscope** – an instrument that is inserted via the urethra to cut and remove tissue (**biopsy**) from the prostate gland or bladder.

**Retrograde ejaculation** – semen is passed back into the bladder. Also called **reverse ejaculation**.

**Saw palmetto** – a medicinal plant used to treat testicle and prostate problems.

**Screening** – regular testing for a disease when there are no symptoms present.

**Scrotum** – a pouch of skin forming part of the male reproductive organ that contains the testes, spermatic cords and epididymis. The scrotum hangs outside the body and behind the penis.

**Semen** – fluid produced by the male reproductive system and consists of sperm, fluid from the seminal vesicle, prostate and bulbourethral glands. Also called **ejaculate**.

**Seminal vesicles** – two highly coiled glands attached to the bladder and prostate gland forming part of the male reproductive organs. The seminal vesicles secrete a mucous fluid that is added to the semen during ejaculation.

**Sphincter** – a circular band of muscle that can relax and contract to open and close like a tap.

**Staging** – tests or examinations to determine the extent of a cancer, especially the spread from its original site to other parts of the body. The most common staging system is the **TNM system**.

**Stress incontinence** – uncontrolled loss of a small amount of urine as a result of any strenuous activity, laughing, coughing, sneezing or lifting heavy objects.

**Stricture** – a blockage of a tube such as the urethra that may be caused by the contraction of scar tissue following surgery.

**Testicles** – part of the male reproductive organs consisting of two oval shaped glands in the scrotum which produce sperm and the male hormone testosterone. Prior to ejaculation sperm is released from the epididymis which acts as a reservoir of sperm and is added to it to form part of the semen. Plural – testes.

**Testosterone** – male hormone produced by the testes.

**TNM system** – a system for grading cancer, depending on the size and invasiveness of the tumour, whether lymph nodes are affected and whether there is **metastasis**.

**Transrectal ultrasound** – a means of imaging the prostate in order to locate cancer. A small ultrasound instrument is inserted into the back passage (rectum) and images of the prostate gland are produced on a screen.

**Transurethral Electro vaporisation (TVP)** – treatment where a specialised device is inserted into the urethra and heat energy is used to vaporise the prostate tissue causing the obstruction.

**Transurethral Incision of the Prostate (TUIP)** – a surgical procedure where a special instrument (**resectoscope**) is inserted through the urethra and two or three small cuts are made in the neck of the bladder and partly through the prostate to relieve any obstruction.

**Transurethral Microwave Therapy (TUMT)** – treatment where a device is inserted into the urethra and microwaves heat and destroy excess prostate tissue, shrinking the gland and relieving urinary symptoms.

**Transurethral Radiofrequency Needle Ablation (TUNA)**

– treatment using low-level radiofrequency energy to burn away part of the enlarged prostate.

**Transurethral Resection of the Prostate (TURP)** – a surgical procedure that uses a special instrument (**resectoscope**) inserted into the urethra to remove part or all of the prostate gland to relieve symptoms of urinary obstruction.

**Tumour** – an abnormal mass of tissue.

**Ultrasound** – an examination where sound waves are transmitted into the body and the echoes received are used to produce images on screen and film.

**Urethra** – tube running along the length of the penis from the bladder through which urine and semen exit.

**Urethral milking** – refer to **milking (urethral)**.

**Urethritis** – inflammation of the **urethra**.

**Urethroplasty** – dilation of the prostatic urethra using a catheter with an in-built balloon. This specialised balloon is inflated to re-establish a more open urethra.

**Urge incontinence** – when you suddenly need to go to the toilet without warning; you may even wet your pants while on your way to the toilet.

**Urodynamics** – tests to measure the pressures in the bladder and urethra during filling and emptying. Urodynamic tests are used to work out the cause of urinary symptoms.

**Urologist** – a specialist medical doctor, who diagnoses, manages and treats diseases of the urinary tract in men and women.

**Vas (ductus) deferens** – ducts (tubes) that take sperm to the urethra on ejaculation.

**Watchful waiting** – now called surveillance or deferred treatment - a decision to wait and monitor progress of mild symptoms of prostate disease.

## Acronyms

<b>BNI</b>	Bladder Neck Incision (also known as TUIP)	<b>TNM</b>	Tumour Node Metastasis
<b>BPE</b>	Benign Prostatic Enlargement	<b>TUIP</b>	Transurethral Incision of Prostate (also known as BNI)
<b>EBRT</b>	External Beam Radiotherapy	<b>TUMT</b>	Transurethral Microwave Therapy
<b>GP</b>	General Practitioner (Doctor)	<b>TUNA</b>	Transurethral Radiofrequency Needle Ablation
<b>LHRH</b>	Luteinising Hormone Releasing Hormone	<b>TURP</b>	Transurethral Resection of the Prostate
<b>LUTS</b>	Lower Urinary Tract Symptoms	<b>TVP</b>	Transurethral Electro vaporisation
<b>PSA</b>	Prostate Specific Antigen		