

## What Is It?

The prostate is a gland in men that is about the size of a walnut. It lies below the bladder and in front of the rectum. The tube that takes urine out of the body (urethra) goes through the prostate.

There are three types of prostate problems:

- **Benign Prostatic Hyperplasia or BPH:** After age 40, it is common for a man's prostate gland to enlarge. This is called benign prostatic hyperplasia (or BPH). BPH does not indicate or cause prostate cancer. A man can have BPH and have no problems at all. Or he may have a problem urinating. BPH can block the flow of urine from the bladder. Sometimes BPH can cause the kidneys to stop working.
- **Prostatitis:** Prostatitis happens when the prostate gland gets inflamed (swollen and painful). Prostatitis is not cancer. It can be an infection caused by bacteria or it can occur for unknown reasons. It can be a short, one-time thing, or it can reoccur. It can happen in men of any age.
- **Prostate cancer:** Prostate cancer is more common in older men. If prostate cancer is found early, it may be cured. In most men, prostate cancer grows very slowly. Prostate cancer can cause serious medical problems and sometimes death.



**Vietnam Veterans of America**  
8719 Colesville Road, Suite 100  
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910  
301-585-4000  
vva.org



# PROSTATE DISEASE GOT THIS?



**IMPORTANT FACTS &  
WHAT TO DO IF YOU  
HAVE A PROBLEM  
& SERVED IN THE  
REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM  
OR IN THE WATERS  
OFFSHORE.**



## Follow These Important Guidelines

### How Can You Tell If You Have Prostate Cancer ?

Not all prostate problems cause the same symptoms. Some cause no symptoms at all.

Possible Signs of a Prostate Problem:

- ✓ Weak flow of urine
- ✓ Having to urinate more often
- ✓ Having to get up at night to urinate
- ✓ Blood in the urine
- ✓ Trouble starting to urinate
- ✓ Trouble waiting to urinate
- ✓ A urine flow that stops and starts
- ✓ Pain or burning during urination



- ✓ If you are over 40 years old, have a prostate exam every year.
- ✓ If you have symptoms of a prostate problem that does not go away, have a prostate exam right away.
- ✓ If you get prostate disease, ask your doctor about treatment choices.
- ✓ Follow your treatment plan exactly (For example, always take your medicine as prescribed by your doctor.)
- ✓ Let your doctor know how you are doing. Ask questions.
- ✓ Keep appointments.
- ✓ Get the tests you're suppose to have.

### Treatment Options For Prostate Cancer

The Gleason Score measures how quickly your prostate cancer is growing and will assist in determining your treatment options, along with how much it has spread and the benefits and side effects of the treatment. There are several treatment options for prostate cancer:

- ✓ Surgery
- ✓ Radiation therapy
- ✓ Hormone therapy
- ✓ Freezing prostate tissue (cryoablation)
- ✓ Chemotherapy
- ✓ Biological Therapy (immunotherapy)
- ✓ Permanent prostate brachytherapy

These options may be used alone or in combination. Listen carefully to each option offered. Ask questions. You will want to know the effects and side effects to make an informed decision.

Prostate cancer is a major health problem. Research into the best treatment is continuing.

The progression or regression of prostate cancer can be monitored with a simple blood test. Do not miss a scheduled test.



If you served in Vietnam and have prostate cancer, it is presumed by the Veterans Health Administration that your cancer is a result of your service.

If you have the Vietnam Service Ribbon and Prostate cancer, the VA will provide you with health care for the problem and a monthly compensation check. You may continue to use your own health care and have the VA provide medications.

A veteran service representative will assist you in filing a claim and will sign you up for health care benefits. They will need a copy of your DD214 and medical records related to your cancer.