

Marching for men to stop prostate cancer becoming a killer



1 in 8 men are expected to get prostate cancer in their lifetime.

Prostate cancer is the most common cancer in men in the UK, with over 47,000 new cases diagnosed every year, that's 130 men every day.

March is prostate cancer awareness month so we thought we'd explain more about it and also highlight an [awareness event taking place at Roundhay Park](#), Leeds, later in the year.

Prostate cancer usually develops slowly, sometimes over many years, so there may be no signs you have it. Symptoms often only become apparent when your prostate is large enough to affect the urethra (the tube that carries urine from the bladder to the penis).

When this happens, you may notice things like an increased need to urinate, straining while urinating and a feeling that your bladder has not fully emptied.

These symptoms shouldn't be ignored, but they do not mean you have prostate cancer. It is more likely they are caused by something else, such as benign prostatic hyperplasia (also known as BPH or prostate enlargement).

What is the prostate?

The prostate is a small gland in the pelvis found only in men. About the size of a Satsuma, it's located between the penis and the bladder and surrounds the urethra. The main function is to help in the production of semen.

Causes of prostate cancer

It is not known exactly what causes prostate cancer, although a number of things can increase your risk of developing the condition.

These include:

- **Age** –risk rises as you get older and most cases are diagnosed in men over 50 years of age. The average age for men to be diagnosed with prostate cancer is between 65 and 69 years. Men under 50 can get it, but it isn't common.
- **Ethnic group** –prostate cancer is more common among men of African-Caribbean and African descent than in men of Asian descent.
- **Family history** –having a brother or father who developed prostate cancer under the age of 60 seems to increase the risk of you developing it. Research also shows that having a close female relative who developed breast cancer may also increase your risk of developing prostate cancer.

- **Obesity** – recent research suggests that there may be a link between obesity and prostate cancer.
- **Exercise** – men who regularly exercise have also been found to be at lower risk of developing prostate cancer.
- **Diet** – research is ongoing into the links between diet and prostate cancer. There is evidence that a diet high in calcium is linked to an increased risk of developing prostate cancer. In addition, some research has shown that prostate cancer rates appear to be lower in men who eat foods containing certain nutrients including lycopene, found in cooked tomatoes and other red fruit, and selenium, found in brazil nuts. However, more research is needed.

Tests for prostate cancer

The most commonly used tests for prostate cancer are blood tests, a physical examination (known as a digital rectal examination or DRE) and a biopsy. All tests used to help diagnose the condition have benefits and risks, which your doctor should discuss with you.

How is prostate cancer treated?

'State of Men's Health in Leeds' research undertaken by Leeds Beckett University Institute for Health and Wellbeing, found the mortality rate (52.03 per 100,000 men of all ages for 2010-2012) has remained mostly unchanged, suggesting treatment is more effective and that some identified cancers were not life-limiting.

For many men with prostate cancer, treatment is not immediately necessary. If the cancer is at an early stage and not causing symptoms, a policy of "watchful waiting" or "active surveillance" may be adopted. This involves carefully monitoring your condition.

Some cases of prostate cancer can be cured if treated in the early stages. Treatments include surgically removing the prostate, radiotherapy and hormone therapy.

Some cases are only diagnosed at a later stage when the cancer has spread. If the cancer spreads to other parts of the body, typically the bones, it cannot be cured and treatment is focused on prolonging life and relieving symptoms.

All treatment options carry the risk of significant side effects, including erectile dysfunction and urinary incontinence. For this reason, many men choose to delay treatment until there is a risk the cancer might spread.

Act now, be aware of the early signs and symptoms and seek medical advice at the earliest opportunity should you experience something that is not normal for you.

You can also show your support by [registering for the March for Men event](#) on 18th June at Roundhay Park, Leeds

For more information follow this link: [Prostate Cancer UK - We're here to stop prostate cancer being a killer.](#)