

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS: LIFE AFTER PROSTATE CANCER

How common is prostate cancer?¹

Worldwide, more than 1.1 million men are diagnosed with prostate cancer every year, making it the second most common cancer in men. Two thirds of newly diagnosed prostate cancer cases are in the developed regions of the world.

Are some men more likely to be diagnosed with prostate cancer?

Older men and men with a family history of the disease may have an increased likelihood of being diagnosed with the disease.² The common age for all men at prostate cancer diagnosis is 66 years old.²

How much does family history of prostate cancer increase my risk?³

Men with a primary relative affected by prostate cancer (a brother or father) are more than twofold as likely to develop the disease. Men with familial prostate cancer may develop the disease at an earlier age. They should begin testing with both the PSA blood test and the digital rectal examination at age 45 or even younger if they have multiple relatives with the disease.³

How curable is prostate cancer?

In general, the earlier the cancer is caught, the more likely it is for the patient to remain disease-free after treatment. Because approximately 90% of all prostate cancers are detected in the local and regional stages, the survival rate for prostate cancer is very high — nearly 99% after five years.^{2,4}

What are the symptoms of prostate cancer?

If the cancer is caught at its earliest stages, most men may not experience any symptoms. Some men, however, may experience symptoms such as frequent, hesitant or burning urination, difficulty in having an erection, or pain or stiffness in the lower back, hips or upper thighs.⁴

What are some of the side effects from removing a prostate?

Side effects may occur but there are success treatment options available. The two common side effects of radical prostatectomy are loss of erections and urinary incontinence.⁵

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It's been a year since my prostatectomy and I still have no control of my bladder. What can I do?

Over the course of the first year following surgery, continence may return in the majority of men. However, 8%–56% of men will report some degree of SUI to be a significant problem one year after their prostatectomy.^{6,7} After 12 months, if you think you may still be suffering from SUI, you may want to seek out a urologist.

Why don't all men recover erectile function after surgery?

The most obvious determinant of post-operative erectile function is how the man was prior to the operation. Post-operative erectile dysfunction is compounded in some patients by risk factors that may include: older age, pre-existing erectile and urinary function, as well as urinary control.⁸

Can a man resume sexual activity after a prostate cancer surgery?

If the cancer is detected early and patients are treated by an experienced surgeon using nerve-sparing techniques, then sex lives may return after surgery – usually beginning within three to six months and then having continued improvement for two to three years. Sexual function may be restored in a lot of different ways now with medication, vacuum erection devices and certain types of injections.⁹

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