

## Resource Information

For more information about prostate cancer screening, call any of these toll-free numbers:

Texas Department of Health  
**1-800-242-3399**

American Cancer Society  
**1-800-227-2345**

Cancer Information Service  
**1-800-422-6237**

## Website Information

**Texas Department of Health**  
<http://www.tdh.state.tx.us/PROSTATE.HTM>

**American Cancer Society**  
<http://www.cancer.org>

**Centers for Disease Control and Prevention**  
<http://www.cdc.gov>



THE UNIVERSITY of Texas  
HEALTH SCIENCE CENTER AT HOUSTON



TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH  
STOCK # 10-52

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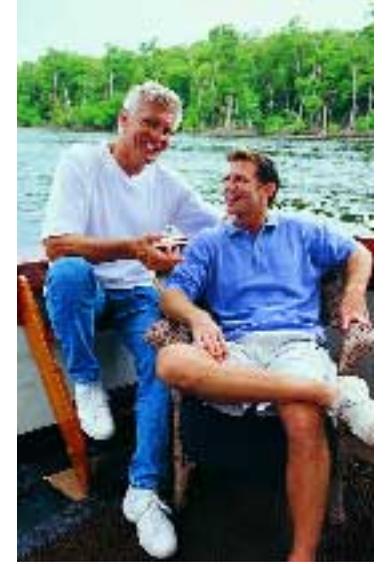
# Is Prostate Cancer Screening For Me?

*This brochure is designed to help you talk to your doctor about whether prostate cancer screening is right for you.*

## Who is at Risk?

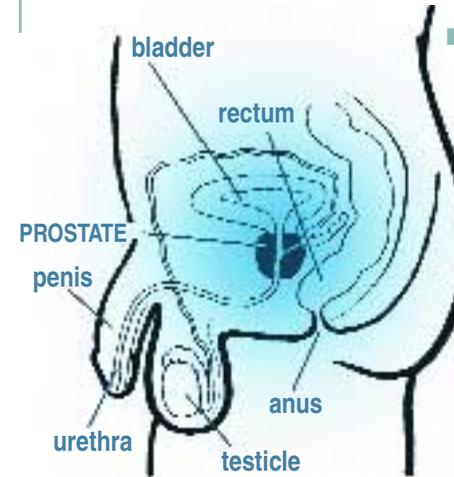
The risk of getting prostate cancer is higher in a man who...

- is 50 years or older
- is 45 years or older and has a father or brother with prostate cancer
- is African American



## What are the Facts?

The prostate is a sexual gland found only in men. About the size of a walnut, the prostate helps produce semen and surrounds a portion of the tube through which urine passes called the urethra.



- Prostate cancer is the most common type of cancer (besides skin cancer) found in men.
- Approximately 1 in 6 men will develop prostate cancer in his lifetime.
- Prostate cancer accounts for more deaths in men than any other type of cancer except lung cancer.
- In the United States, prostate cancer accounts for over 31,600 deaths per year.

## What are the Symptoms?

A man with early prostate cancer may have no symptoms. However, you should talk with your doctor if you have any of the following symptoms:

- Pain
- Weight loss
- Difficulty with sexual function
- Difficulty urinating
- Difficulty holding urine

# What is Prostate Cancer Screening?



It is recommended that all men, starting at age 50, discuss prostate cancer screening with their doctor. There are two screening tests available. They can be done separately or together.

- Digital Rectal Exam
- Prostate Specific Antigen (PSA) Test

## Digital Rectal Exam

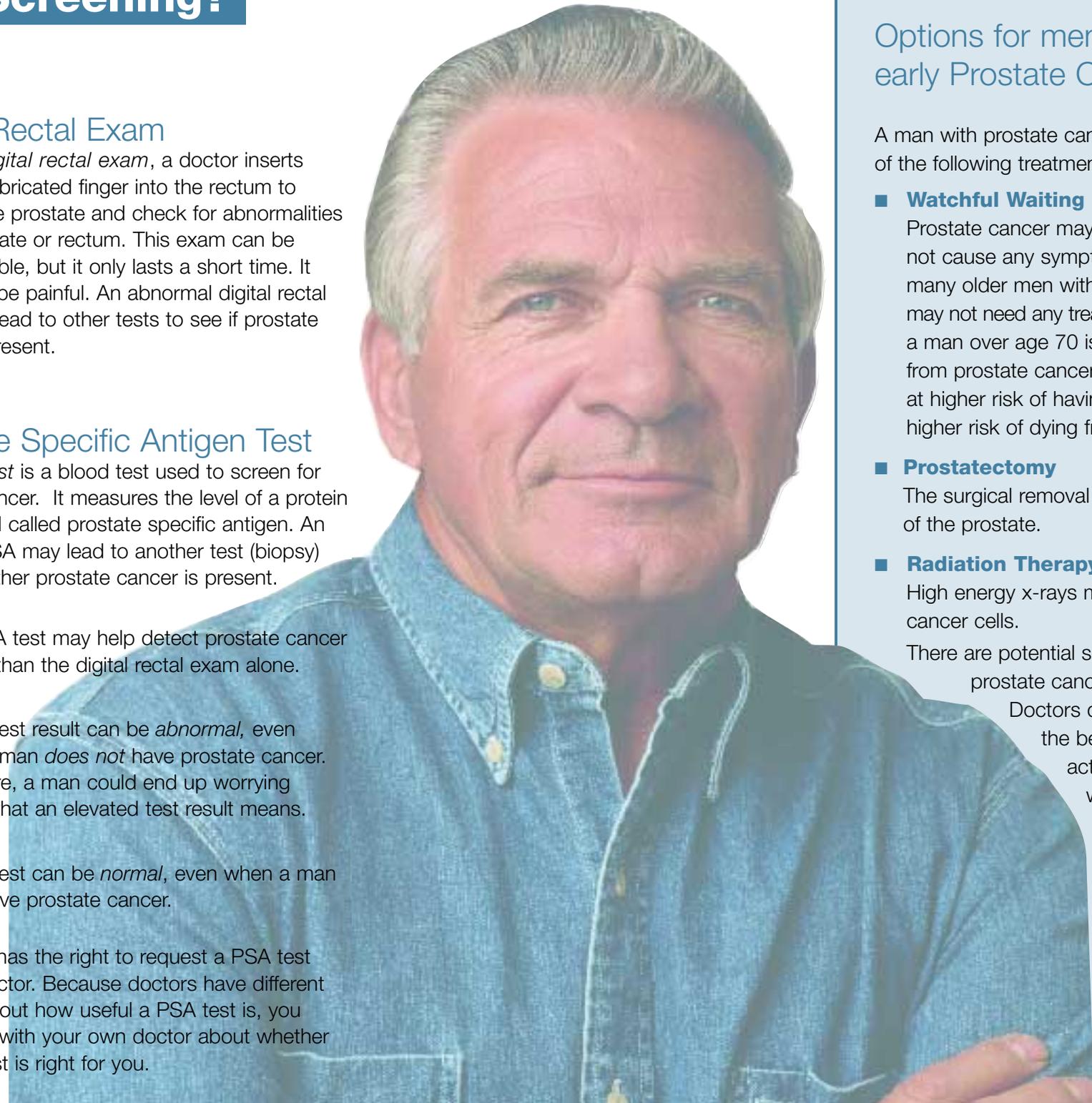
During a *digital rectal exam*, a doctor inserts a gloved, lubricated finger into the rectum to examine the prostate and check for abnormalities of the prostate or rectum. This exam can be uncomfortable, but it only lasts a short time. It should not be painful. An abnormal digital rectal exam may lead to other tests to see if prostate cancer is present.

## Prostate Specific Antigen Test

The *PSA test* is a blood test used to screen for prostate cancer. It measures the level of a protein in the blood called prostate specific antigen. An elevated PSA may lead to another test (biopsy) to see whether prostate cancer is present.

- The PSA test may help detect prostate cancer sooner than the digital rectal exam alone.
- A PSA test result can be *abnormal*, even when a man *does not* have prostate cancer. Therefore, a man could end up worrying about what an elevated test result means.
- A PSA test can be *normal*, even when a man *does* have prostate cancer.

Every man has the right to request a PSA test from his doctor. Because doctors have different opinions about how useful a PSA test is, you should talk with your own doctor about whether the PSA test is right for you.



## Options for men with early Prostate Cancer

A man with prostate cancer can choose one of the following treatment options:

### ■ Watchful Waiting

Prostate cancer may grow slowly and not cause any symptoms. Therefore, many older men with prostate cancer may not need any treatment. For example, a man over age 70 is less likely to die from prostate cancer, even though he is at higher risk of having it. He may be at higher risk of dying from something else.

### ■ Prostatectomy

The surgical removal of part, or all of the prostate.

### ■ Radiation Therapy

High energy x-rays may be used to kill cancer cells.

There are potential side effects with prostate cancer treatment.

Doctors do not know what the best course of action is for a man with early prostate cancer. That is why a man should discuss the options with his doctor.

If you are diagnosed with prostate cancer, ask your doctor about clinical treatment trials.