

PROSTATE CANCER

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Prostate cancer is the most diagnosed cancer in men in Puerto Rico. This cancer develops when malignant or cancerous tissue of the prostate cells are formed. The function of the prostate is to produce the fluid that is part of the semen. It is located below the bladder and in front of the rectum. Its size is approximately that of a walnut. With the man's age, the size of the prostate tends to increase.

Among the risk factors that contribute to the development of prostate cancer are:

- **Race:** black men are at greater risk.
- **Age:** increases the risk after 50 years.
- **Family history:** men with a father, son or brother who has had prostate cancer are at greater risk.
- **Geography:** common in North America, northwestern Europe, Australia and the Caribbean islands. The reasons are unclear but is likely due to increased use of screening tests, lifestyle and food, among others.

Prostate cancer has no symptoms or produces them too late. Only one in nine men has symptoms. Some of the symptoms are as follows:

- Difficulty starting to urinate.
- Weak or interrupted urine flow.
- Frequent urination, especially at night.
- Pain or burning when urinating or ejaculating.
- Blood in the urine or semen.
- Persistent pain in the lower back, hips or pelvis.

TESTS TO CHECK THE PROSTATE:

- Digital rectal exam (DRE)
- Blood test PSA (prostate-specific antigen)

If the results of these tests are abnormal, other tests are performed. Every man should discuss your situation and risk of prostate cancer with your doctor to make a decision on the tests performed.