

# Prostate Health



The prostate is a gland in the male body that surrounds the urethra, the tube that carries urine from the bladder out of the body. As a man ages, the gland grows larger and the chance of developing a prostate condition increases. It is important for men to know about the symptoms and treatment options for these conditions in order to make informed decisions about their health.

## Common Prostate Problems

According to Mayo Clinic, one of the most common prostate conditions is prostate gland enlargement, also known as benign prostatic hyperplasia. The enlarged prostate can start to press against the bladder and the urethra, slowing down or blocking urine flow. If urine flow is completely blocked, bladder, urinary tract or kidney problems can result. Treatment includes medication that can shrink the prostate gland to relieve pressure and improve urine flow, as well as various surgical procedures. Mayo Clinic lists the following prostate gland enlargement symptoms:

- weak urine stream
- trouble starting a urine stream
- frequent or urgent need to urinate
- waking up several times during the night to urinate
- dribbling at the end of urination
- feeling as if the bladder has not completely emptied
- straining to pass urine



One common symptom of prostate gland enlargement is the frequent or urgent need to urinate.

Another common prostate problem is prostatitis, which is the swelling and inflammation of the prostate gland. Mayo Clinic lists these symptoms:

- pain or burning sensation while urinating
- pain in the abdomen, groin or lower back
- pain or discomfort in the penis or testicles
- painful orgasms

Treatment depends on the cause of the prostatitis, but antibiotics or other medications are typically used.

## Prostate Health Screenings

Doctors use two main screening methods to check the health of the prostate:

- A digital rectal exam, which allows a doctor to feel the prostate for irregularities in size, shape and texture.
- A prostate-specific antigen (PSA) blood test, which measures the level of PSA in the blood.

Getting regular prostate screenings is the best way to ensure early diagnosis and treatment, especially after age 50.\*

\*For benefit coverage, visit TRICARE's Covered Services page at [www.tricare.mil/coveredservices](http://www.tricare.mil/coveredservices). Ask your doctor for age recommendations and risk guidelines.