

# About Prostate Cancer



## Risk Factors

- Gender - simply being male
- African American ancestry
- Age - older men have a greater risk
- Personal or family history of prostate cancer
- Obesity

Prostate cancer is the presence of abnormal cells and/or a tumor in the prostate gland, a part of the male reproductive system. Except for skin cancer, prostate cancer is the most common cancer in American men. Prostate cancer tends to grow slowly when compared to other cancers. Most men with prostate cancer will die of other causes rather than prostate cancer.

## Prostate Cancer in North Carolina

Prostate cancer was the fifth leading cause of cancer deaths in North Carolina in 2012 (4.6%) and is the most frequently diagnosed cancer in men.<sup>1</sup> It was estimated that 8,399 males in North Carolina would be diagnosed with prostate cancer and 1,009 males would die from prostate cancer in 2014.<sup>2</sup>

## Prevention

Because there is no known cause of prostate cancer, it is difficult to determine how best to prevent it. Eating red meats, dairy products and fatty foods and cooking meats at high temperatures appear to increase the risk of prostate cancer. Obesity appears to increase the risk of aggressive prostate cancer. There is some evidence that occupational exposures to certain toxic chemicals increase the risk.

## Signs and Symptoms of Prostate Cancer

Early prostate cancer has no symptoms. More advanced disease may have the following signs and symptoms:

- Difficulty in starting urination,
- Weak or interrupted urine flow,
- Frequent urination, especially at night,
- Difficulty in emptying the bladder completely,
- Pain or burning during urination,
- Blood in the urine or semen,
- Pain in the back, hips or pelvis that doesn't go away and/or
- Painful ejaculation.

If you have any of these signs or have questions about prostate cancer, contact your healthcare provider for an appointment.

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<sup>1</sup> State Center for Health Statistics, North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services. North Carolina Central Cancer Registry. *Statistics and Reports: Cancer*. <http://www.schs.state.nc.us/data/cancer.cfm>

<sup>2</sup> State Center for Health Statistics, North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services. North Carolina Central Cancer Registry. Projected New Cancer Cases and Deaths For All Sites, 2014. <http://www.schs.state.nc.us/schs/CCR/proj14site.pdf>