

Tests to Diagnose and Monitor Prostate Cancer



Canadian
Cancer
Society



You probably have a lot of questions if you or a loved one has been diagnosed with prostate cancer.

How fast is it growing?

Has it spread?

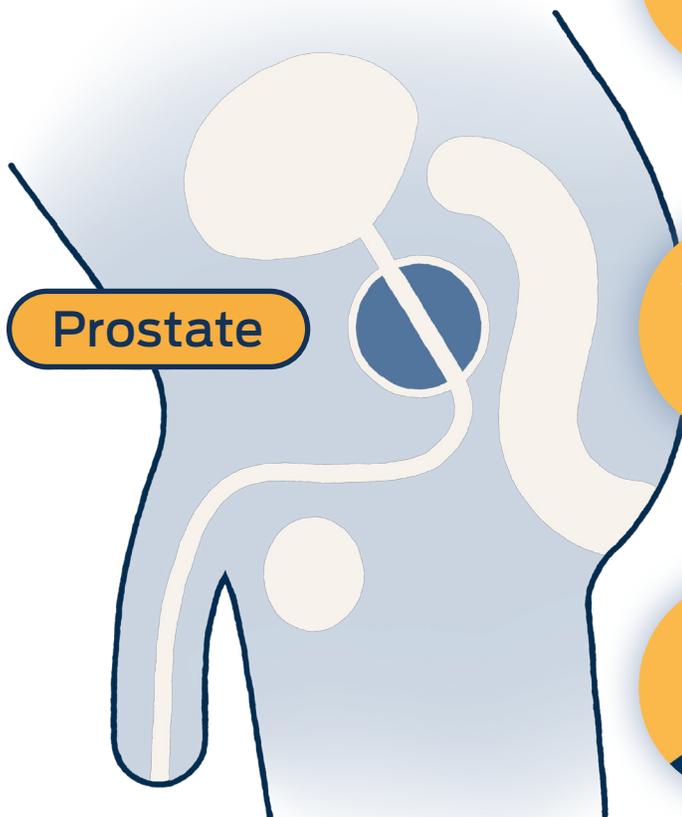
Has the cancer come back after treatment?

Your healthcare team will use different tests to answer these questions.

PSA Test

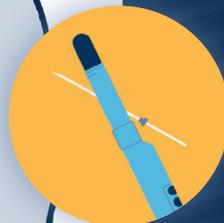
The PSA test helps detect prostate cancer. It is also used to show how well your treatment is working or if the cancer is growing.

Regularly measuring PSA levels helps your healthcare team monitor the prostate cancer.



Digital rectal exam (DRE)

Also known as the “finger exam,” the doctor inserts a finger into the rectum to feel for any irregular areas on the prostate that could be cancerous.



Prostate biopsy

A needle takes small samples of tissue from the prostate to look for cancer cells. While other tests can suggest there might be something wrong, a biopsy is the only way to know that it is prostate cancer.



Transrectal ultrasound (TRUS)

Sound waves from a small probe placed into the rectum create images of the prostate, guiding the biopsy needle.

Other Tests

Your doctor may use different imaging tests to see inside your body and get pictures of your bones and organs to answer questions like:

- How large is the tumour?
- Where is it in the body?
- Is my treatment working?

CT scan

Using x-rays from different angles to create 3D images of your organs, CT scans let your doctor see if the cancer has spread to lymph nodes or other tissues.



MRI

Using powerful magnets and radio waves, an MRI produces 3D images of organs, tissues, bones and blood to measure the tumour's size and look for signs that the cancer has spread. MRIs produce clearer images than CT scans.

PET scan

A new type of imaging test, PET uses radiation to find cancer cells. It is becoming more common but is usually only available through clinical trials.



Bone scan

Using a small amount of radiation, your doctor can see if the cancer has spread to the bones. You may have this scan if you have bone pain or your doctor suspects the cancer has spread.



Not everyone with prostate cancer needs imaging tests. Your healthcare team will decide if they are necessary based on how you're feeling or if there is a risk the cancer has spread.

For more information, support and resources visit cancer.ca



Canadian
Cancer
Society

