

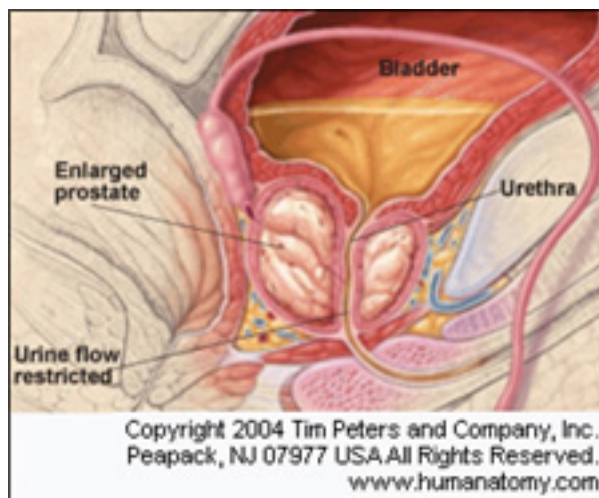


BPH or Enlarged Prostate

For men, enlargement of the prostate is a natural part of getting older. Around the age of 40, many men experience a second period of prostate growth. A strong layer of tissue surrounding the prostate prevents it from expanding outward. [BPH symptoms](#) begin as the prostate compresses inward onto the [urethra](#), reducing or obstructing urine flow.

Because the prostate continues to grow during a man's lifetime:

- Men over age 50 have roughly a 50% chance of developing BPH or [enlarged prostate](#).
- By age 80, about 80% to 90% of men are diagnosed with BPH or enlarged prostate.



The good news is that BPH or enlarged prostate is a manageable condition. It is important to know that BPH or enlarged prostate is not cancerous and does not lead to cancer. However, it is possible for men to have both BPH or enlarged prostate and [prostate cancer](#).

Learn more about BPH or enlarged prostate, including:

- [Causes and risk factors of BPH or enlarged prostate](#)
- [BPH or enlarged prostate symptoms and signs](#)
- [How BPH or enlarged prostate is diagnosed](#)
- [BPH or enlarged prostate treatment options](#)

The health information contained herein is provided for general educational purposes only. Please consult your healthcare professional if you have any questions about your health or treatment.



BPH or Enlarged Prostate — Causes and Risk Factors

The exact cause of BPH is not well understood. However, during their lifetime, men produce [testosterone](#) (a male hormone) and a small amount of estrogen (a female hormone). The amount of active testosterone decreases as a man ages, resulting in a higher proportion of estrogen in the blood. Studies have suggested that a higher proportion of estrogen may encourage cell growth within the prostate, which may lead to BPH or enlarged prostate.

Another theory regarding the cause of BPH or enlarged prostate suggests that accumulation of dihydrotestosterone (DHT), a substance derived from testosterone in the prostate, may encourage cell growth.

Primary risk factors for BPH or enlarged prostate include:

- **Aging** — the main risk factor for the BPH or enlarged prostate
- **Heredity** — a family history of BPH or enlarged prostate
- **Marital status** — for reasons that are not known, men who are married are more likely to develop BPH or enlarged prostate than single men
- **Nationality** — BPH or enlarged prostate is more common in Americans and Europeans than in Asian men

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BPH or Enlarged Prostate — Symptoms

[BPH](#) or [enlarged prostate](#) symptoms vary from person to person. In many men, these symptoms are not problematic. However, many men with this condition have prostate symptoms that are bothersome enough for them to seek medical treatment.

Many of the symptoms of BPH or enlarged prostate are caused by obstruction of the urethra, along with gradual loss of bladder function. The size of the prostate does not always correspond with the severity of the obstruction or the symptoms, which may include:

Obstructive symptoms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feeling of incomplete bladder emptying • Delay and difficulty in initiating an urinary stream • Stopping and starting urination several times during voiding • Weak urinary stream • Dribbling at the end of urination • Pushing or straining while urinating
Irritative symptoms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feeling of little warning when the urge of urination develops • Frequent urination with short intervals • Need to urinate during the night • Inability to hold back urine

Acute Urinary Retention

Some men may not know they have a urinary blockage until they suddenly find that they cannot urinate at all. This is called acute urinary retention. This condition may be caused by some over-the-counter cold or allergy medicines that contain an ingredient that can prevent the bladder from relaxing and releasing urine. In men who have a partial blockage, alcohol, cold temperatures, or a long period of immobility can cause urinary retention.

When to See a Doctor about BPH or Enlarged Prostate

See your doctor if you are experiencing any urinary problems, even if they are not bothersome. Your doctor can determine if you have [BPH](#) or enlarged prostate, and whether your [diagnosis](#) requires treatment.

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