

Prostate Screen (PSA)

PSA (prostate-specific antigen) is a protein made by the cells of the prostate. The routine PSA test measures the amount of prostate-specific antigen in the blood. Rising or changing levels of PSA may be a sign of a prostate problem, perhaps as serious as cancer.

How common is prostate cancer?

After skin cancer, prostate cancer is the most common cancer among men and is the second leading cause of cancer death behind only lung cancer, according to the American Cancer Society. Prostate cancer occurs mainly in older men as approximately 6 cases in 10 are diagnosed in men aged 65 or older, and it is rare before age 40. The average age at the time of diagnosis is about 66. While about 1 in 7 men will be diagnosed with prostate cancer during his lifetime, it can often be treated successfully.

What are the symptoms of prostate cancer?

Early prostate cancers usually don't cause symptoms, but more advanced cases may exhibit the following:

- Urinary issues
- Sexual problems

What should I do if the results are abnormal or out of range?

It is always recommended you meet with a healthcare provider to determine what your laboratory test results mean to you. Your healthcare provider will review all of your test results and, combined with your health history, will be able to provide an accurate course of action.

If your results were high: If your result was abnormally high, there are benign conditions to consider (enlarged prostate, prostate inflammation, kidney retention) in addition to the presence of prostate cancer. Please note that PSA levels increase with age even in cancer-free men, and an elevated PSA level does not necessarily mean cancer. It is important to share your PSA results with your healthcare provider so that your results can be further investigated. Generally, the results from a PSA blood test and a digital rectal exam (DRE) along with your age are considered when estimating the level of risk for prostate cancer. As with any abnormal results, it's important that you discuss their implications with your healthcare provider.

If your results were within the normal range: If your results were within the normal PSA range, you should consult with your healthcare provider for recommendations on when you should be tested again. The American Cancer Society suggests men who are not at risk for prostate cancer should begin annual testing at age 50. African American men and men with a close relative who has had prostate cancer should begin annual testing at age 45. Your healthcare provider is best suited to advise you on a timetable for all screening tests.

What other resources are available to learn more about my health and laboratory tests?

- American Cancer Society: cancer.org
- Lab Tests Online: labtestsonline.org
- WebMD: webmd.com

DLO Direct offers direct access to laboratory testing for informational purposes. A DLO Direct lab test result is not a medical diagnosis and is not intended as medical advice. Only a healthcare provider can interpret lab results and diagnose a medical condition or disease.

Because tests have not been ordered by a healthcare provider, third party entities, including Medicare and Medicaid, will not reimburse for these tests.



dlodirect.com • 800.891.2917