



The Prostate

OVERVIEW

The prostate gland is a chestnut sized gland formed around the male urethra and located just below the bladder. It has various functions in male sexual and reproductive activities, such as secreting some of the fluid in semen. In their early to mid-fifties, it is increasingly common for the prostate gland to enlarge. The men affected to start to experience difficulty in urinating or the need to urinate frequently during the night (nocturia). During the day, urination may be frequent but it is often ineffective, with just a small amount of urine being passed very slowly. These symptoms are often accompanied by pain or discomfort around the anus and between the legs. All these signs and symptoms indicate enlargement of the prostate. Doctors may describe this enlargement as benign prostatic hyperplasia (BPH). Prostatitis, or inflammation of the prostate, can cause similar symptoms.

Left untreated, this problem is likely to get worse. Prostate cancer may develop in some cases and the retention of urine can also lead to bladder or kidney problems. Men are generally less willing to consult a doctor than women but it is important they should do so if their problems persist.

Research indicates that prostatic enlargement and prostatitis may be caused by dietary deficiencies, excessive smoking and constipation. In particular, a high dietary intake of saturated fat, hydrogenated oils (found in margarines and low fat spreads) and processed foods, coupled with a low intake of essential minerals, especially zinc, fresh fruit, vegetables and essential fatty acids can lead to BPH.

Further proof for this comes from cultures with low incidences of prostatitis and BPH. These cultures typically have a high intake of fresh fruit and vegetables and do very little cooking with fats and oils.

DEFINITION

Benign prostatic hyperplasia: a condition in which enlargement of the prostate gland causes urinary difficulties.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Dietary changes

Various dietary changes can help to alleviate the problems caused by prostatic enlargement. These changes are aimed at rehydrating the body and relieving any constipation, preventing any protein build-up in the prostate or removing it if it has already occurred and replacing harmful fats with beneficial fats.

To start to improve prostate health, stick to a diet consisting mainly of raw vegetables, fruit, salad and pure water for three weeks. This alone may relieve mild symptoms, but should be repeated for at least one week in every four weeks to prevent the build-up of protein in the prostate or toxins in the body.

When the problems are more persistent, a longer-term strategy is needed. This involves a number of dietary changes.

Additions to the diet

- Sunflower seeds and pumpkin seeds - 2 oz (50g) of each daily. Chew these well to extract and absorb the essential oils and minerals they contain, especially zinc from the pumpkin seeds, or grind to a powder (like ground coffee) and store in the fridge.
- Live yoghurt - 1 small pot daily. Goat's milk yoghurt is ideal if you are intolerant of dairy foods.
- Eat at least one fresh, seasonal salad daily, preferably including parsley and alfalfa.
- Drink plenty of fresh, raw fruit juices. Tomato, carrot and beetroot are best for prostate problems.

- Eat some set, unfiltered organic honey at least once a day. This contains several beneficial minerals and various enzymes that help to normalise the prostate.
- Eat plenty of fruit, but mainly apples, oranges, grapes, raisins, pineapple, figs and prunes. Ripe bananas are also helpful. They should have brown blotches on the skin to indicate ripeness. In ripe bananas, potentially harmful starches have all been converted to fruit sugars.
- 2 to 4 ozs per day of legumes, pulses or beans (soya products, baked beans, chick peas, red beans etc.).
- Consider 2 ozs of tomato puree per day (high in lycopene).

Whenever possible, choose organic fruit and vegetables as they contain more minerals and vitamins than normal supermarket produce.

Things to avoid

- Try to avoid eating meat, fish, poultry and hard cheeses for about six months, or limit them to small quantities of organic produce. This helps to reduce protein build-up in the prostate and reduces your intake of toxic chemicals
- If you feel you have to eat eggs, make sure they are organic. Even so-called 'fresh barn eggs' may still contain harmful chemicals
- Avoid coffee as it contains substances called methylxanthines, which can affect the prostate

SUPPLEMENTATION

Several supplements are beneficial for men with prostate problems. The aim of taking these is to reduce the protein levels in the prostate, improve body zinc levels and improve the circulation.

For recommended suppliers and supplement advice please contact Pauline. Telephone: 01905 798567
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ADDITIONAL THERAPEUTIC STRATEGIES

Onset of prostatitis:

1 teaspoonful of **Echinacea** in cold water at night may also help at the onset of prostatitis and should be continued for two weeks.

For recurrent prostatitis:

Fish Oil 10mls daily for 6 weeks then 5mls daily.

Thermal Therapies

You can help your muscles to normalise urination by stimulating contraction and relaxation with hot and cold water, alternately. You can do this by sitting in the bath, in a large bowl or by liberally sponging the perineum, the area just behind the scrotum.

Try this regimen:

- hot water for 60 seconds
- cold water for 30 seconds
- repeat 3 times, finishing off with cold water.

You should do this every morning and every night until you see an improvement. Some fluid build-up may be discharged from the penis during bathing. This is normal and simply shows that the muscles are being stimulated.

Lower back massage can also help. The masseur should trace a herring bone pattern from about halfway down the back towards the buttocks. He or she should begin at the outer edges of the back and make sweeping strokes towards the spine, going progressively lower with each stroke. A daily 10 minute massage like this stimulates blood flow to the prostate and may also help improve nervous control of the urinary process.

SUMMARY

The simple changes to diet and lifestyle described above can improve prostate function and may avoid the need for surgery, which often results in permanent erectile dysfunction. If part of the prostate is removed surgically, it will start to grow back. This indicates the body's continuing need for this gland. Promoting prostate health to avoid the need for surgery is clearly the best course of action for men at any age.

HOMEOPATHY

Homeopathy can relieve symptoms and restore normal prostate health. Moreover treatment by a qualified homeopath will raise the general level of health and so prevent the likelihood of prostate problems returning. Please phone Pauline to discuss this.

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