



BASIC INFORMATION

DESCRIPTION

Inflammation or infection of the prostate (the gland surrounding the neck of the bladder and urethra). Prostatitis is not contagious. Rarely, it may accompany cancer of the prostate.

FREQUENT SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

- Urgency to urinate.
- Burning with urination.
- Frequent urination; waking at night to urinate.
- Difficulty starting urination and emptying the bladder completely.
- Fever; chills.
- Pain between the scrotum and anus.
- Joint and muscle aches.
- Blood in the urine (sometimes) or semen.
- Low back pain.
- Pain with a doctor's rectal examination.

CAUSES

- Bacterial infection, usually from gram-negative germs such as those found in feces. These may reach the prostate through the bloodstream, the lymphatic system or directly from the urethra.
- The cause of nonbacterial infections is unknown.

RISK INCREASES WITH

- Recent urinary-tract infection.
- Smoking.
- Excess alcohol consumption.

PREVENTIVE MEASURES

Men who have never had prostatitis are less likely to develop it if they are sexually active. Men who have prostatitis at least once may decrease the likelihood of recurrence by increasing sexual activity.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

Usually curable with treatment (sometimes prolonged), but recurrence is common.

POSSIBLE COMPLICATIONS

If untreated, may lead to:

- Blood poisoning.
- Chronic bacterial or nonbacterial prostate infections. These have similar symptoms, but they are more likely to recur and respond less readily to treatment.



TREATMENT

GENERAL MEASURES

- Diagnostic tests may include laboratory studies, such as urinalysis and culture of secretions obtained at the time of the prostate exam.
- Hospitalization for 3 to 4 days in serious cases if blood poisoning is suspected.
- Treatment usually involves medications, rest and adequate fluid intake.
- Surgery to drain an abscess of the prostate (rare).
- Sit in a tub with 6 to 8 inches of warm water (106° F or 41.1° C) for 15 minutes at least 3 times a day. Use a whirlpool bath, if possible.

MEDICATIONS

- Antibiotics to fight infection (usually for at least 30 days).
- Pain relievers.
- Stool softeners to avoid constipation.
- Drugs to reduce fever if needed.

ACTIVITY

Rest in bed until fever and pain subside. Then resume your normal activities gradually. The ability to be sexually active during acute prostatitis depends on the degree of disability.

DIET

No special diet, but don't drink alcohol, coffee or eat spicy foods. These irritate the urethra. Drink 8 to 10 glasses of water a day to ensure an adequate urine flow.



NOTIFY OUR OFFICE IF

- You or a family member has symptoms of prostatitis.
- Symptoms worsen or you have fever during treatment.
- Symptoms don't improve after 3 days of treatment.
- Symptoms recur after treatment.