

PSA Test Information

For Men Aged 40 And Over



WHAT IS A PSA TEST?

- It's a blood test that measures the level of PSA in your blood.
- PSA is a protein made by the prostate gland which naturally leaks into the bloodstream, and how much depends on your age and the health of your prostate.
- A raised PSA can be an early indication of prostate cancer. However, other conditions which are not cancer (e.g. enlargement of the prostate, prostatitis, urinary infection) can also cause a rise in PSA. The PSA test can also fail to detect cancers, i.e. not all men with prostate cancer have a raised PSA.
- **The test itself requires taking a sample of blood, which is then tested.**

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS?

- It may provide reassurance if the test result is normal
- It may detect cancer at an early stage when treatments could be beneficial
- If treatment is successful, the consequences of more advanced cancer are avoided

WHAT ARE THE DOWNSIDES?

- It can miss cancer and provide false reassurance
- It may lead to unnecessary anxiety where no cancer is present
- It might detect slow growing cancer that may never cause any symptoms or shortening of life span

WHAT AFFECTS THE TEST RESULTS?

- Urinary infections
- Long periods of exercise, especially cycling in the last 48 hours
- Ejaculation in the last 48 hours
- Drugs such as finasteride (Proscar)
- A prostate biopsy in the last 6 weeks

WHO IS MOST LIKELY TO HAVE A HIGH PSA?

- People with a family history of prostate cancer
- If you're of black ethnic origin
 - If you're overweight or obese

If you would like to not have your PSA tested, please advise your nurse during your appointment

If you have a high result, you will be advised to discuss the result with your GP. About 3 in 4 men with a raised PSA will not have cancer.