

## What is BPH?

Benign Prostatic Hyperplasia (BPH) is a common condition that affects men, especially as they age. BPH occurs when the prostate gland enlarges, leading to various urinary symptoms.

### Causes:

While the exact cause of BPH is not fully understood, it is believed to be related to hormonal changes and aging. As men age, the cells in the prostate gland can multiply, causing it to enlarge.

### Symptoms:

The symptoms of BPH can vary in severity and may include:

- **Frequent urination:** Needing to urinate more often, especially at night (nocturia).
- **Urgency:** Feeling a sudden and urgent need to urinate.
- **Weak urine stream:** Difficulty starting urination or a weak urine stream.
- **Incomplete emptying:** Feeling like the bladder does not empty completely after urination.
- **Straining:** Needing to strain or push to urinate.
- **Dribbling:** Urine dribbling after urination has finished.

### Diagnosis:

If you experience symptoms of BPH, it is important to consult with a healthcare provider. Diagnosis may involve:

- **Medical history and physical examination:** Your doctor will ask about your symptoms and may perform a physical examination.
- **Digital rectal exam (DRE):** Your doctor may perform a DRE to assess the size and condition of your prostate gland.

- **Urinalysis:** A urine test may be conducted to rule out other possible causes of urinary symptoms.
- **Prostate-specific antigen (PSA) test:** This blood test measures the level of PSA in the blood, which may be elevated in men with BPH or prostate cancer.
- **Imaging tests:** In some cases, imaging tests such as ultrasound or MRI may be ordered to evaluate the size and condition of the prostate gland.

### **Treatment:**

Treatment for BPH depends on the severity of symptoms and may include:

- **Watchful waiting:** In mild cases, your doctor may recommend monitoring your symptoms without immediate treatment.
- **Medications:** There are several medications available to help manage the symptoms of BPH, including alpha-blockers, 5-alpha reductase inhibitors, and combination medications.
- **Minimally invasive procedures:** In some cases, minimally invasive procedures such as transurethral microwave therapy (TUMT), transurethral needle ablation (TUNA), or laser therapy may be recommended to relieve symptoms.
- **Surgery:** In severe cases or when other treatments have not been effective, surgical procedures such as transurethral resection of the prostate (TURP) or laser surgery may be recommended to remove or reduce the size of the prostate gland.

### **Lifestyle Changes:**

In addition to medical treatments, certain lifestyle changes may help manage symptoms of BPH:

- **Limit fluid intake before bedtime:** To reduce nighttime urination.
- **Avoid caffeine and alcohol:** These substances can irritate the bladder and increase urinary symptoms.
- **Urinate when needed:** Try not to hold urine for long periods.
- **Stay active:** Regular physical activity may help improve urinary symptoms.