



Provincial Almoners

Prostate Cancer Awareness



EARLY DETECTION IS THE BEST PROTECTION

Foreword by the Provincial Grand Almoner



Brethren, it is with a deep sense of duty and care that I introduce this Factsheet on Prostate Cancer. As men of conviction and mutual support, we understand the importance of confronting difficult truths for the welfare of our fraternity.

Many of us in the Masonic community are in the age bracket where prostate cancer incidence climbs steeply. In the UK alone, on average, more than 55,000 men are diagnosed annually, and over 12,000 die from prostate cancer—making it the second most common cause of cancer death in men.

Globally, prostate cancer ranks as the second most common male cancer, with new cases set to approach three million annually by 2040 and mortality rising by 85 per cent if no action is taken.

But it doesn't need to be this way: the prognosis for Prostate Cancer is exceptionally favourable when detected early. The key to unlocking this brighter future is for those at risk to seek advice on testing without delay.

In this Factsheet, you will find clear guidance on risk-based testing for older men, informed by the latest research. We explore how age, family history and ethnicity can help every brother understand his personal risk.

You will learn of the different tests available and some of the advantages and the things to consider. You can also read three case studies about the experiences of three current brethren in this Province and how their lives have been impacted by Prostate Cancer.

This Factsheet has a clear message for each one of us:

EARLY DETECTION IS YOUR BEST PROTECTION

I urge every brother over the age of fifty—and those from Black or predisposed families from forty-five—to discuss prostate testing with your doctor without delay. Remember, prostate cancer diagnosed at an early stage carries a survival rate exceeding 90 per cent.

By sharing experiences within our Lodges and drawing on one another's support, we can ensure that no brother faces this journey alone. May this Factsheet equip you with knowledge and inspire action.

Together, let us protect our brethren and uphold the health of our fraternity for generations to come.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized 'C' followed by a horizontal line and a small flourish.

W. Bro. Chris Ward
Provincial Grand Almoner

EARLY DETECTION IS THE BEST PROTECTION

Prostate Cancer Factsheet

Last updated/reviewed August 2025

Each year approximately 55,000 men in the UK are diagnosed with prostate cancer; it is now the most common form of cancer amongst men.

About prostate cancer Sometimes prostate cancer grows slowly. It may not cause any problems and not all cancers will need to be treated. Other prostate cancers grow faster and need to be treated to stop them spreading. There are three types of prostate cancer:

☐ **Early (localised) prostate cancer** – when the cancer cells have not spread into the surrounding tissues and remain within the prostate gland.

☐ **Locally advanced prostate cancer** – when the cancer cells have started to spread into the tissues around the prostate gland.

☐ **Advanced prostate cancer** – when the cancer cells have spread to other parts of the body.

Signs and symptoms Most men with early prostate cancer don't have any signs or symptoms. If a man does experience changes in urination it is important to remember that it is more likely to be a sign of a very common non-cancerous problem called an enlarged prostate (benign prostatic hyperplasia) or other health problem. However, it's always a good idea to get it checked out with a visit to the doctor.

Changes to look out for include:

- ☐ difficulty starting to urinate or emptying your bladder
- ☐ a weak flow when you urinate
- ☐ a feeling that your bladder hasn't emptied properly
- ☐ dribbling urine after you finish urinating
- ☐ needing to urinate more often, especially at night
- ☐ a sudden urge to urinate – you may sometimes leak before you get to the toilet.

Other symptoms to be aware of include:

- ☐ back pain, hip pain or pelvis pain
- ☐ problems getting or keeping an erection
- ☐ blood in the urine or semen
- ☐ unexplained weight loss.

Screening Screening means testing people for early stages of a disease before they have any symptoms. There is currently no national screening programme in the UK or Spain for prostate cancer.

The PSA Test - The PSA test is a straightforward blood test that measures the level of prostate-specific antigen (PSA) in your bloodstream. Elevated PSA levels can indicate prostate changes and will be followed up with further investigations to determine the cause.

EARLY DETECTION IS THE BEST PROTECTION

Who should consider a PSA Test - Men aged 50 and over—or from 45 for those in higher-risk groups—are encouraged to discuss PSA testing with their doctor. A conversation about the test's benefits and limitations will help you understand your prostate health and make an informed decision.

Advantages of PSA Testing

- A normal result can provide genuine peace of mind
- Early detection of prostate changes allows treatment to start sooner
- Finding cancer at an early stage significantly improves survival rates

Points to consider

- PSA levels are one part of the overall picture and may require additional tests
- A raised PSA can lead to further tests to confirm whether or not cancer is present
- Finding a low risk cancer often leads to active monitoring rather than immediate treatment

Meeting your Doctor - When you visit your doctor, you should expect to:

- Discuss your general health and the PSA test
- Undergo a brief physical examination of your prostate, if agreed
- Provide a small blood sample for the PSA test
- Possibly give a urine sample for additional checks

If your GP recommends further investigation, you will be referred to a hospital specialist. Depending on clinical advice, the specialist may arrange:

- An ultrasound scan to view your prostate
- A biopsy to examine prostate tissue
- An MRI scan to produce detailed internal images
- A CT scan for a three dimensional view of your organs
- A bone scan to detect any unusual areas in your bones

Your medical team will guide you through each step and offer support throughout.

EARLY DETECTION IS YOUR BEST PROTECTION - Please remember that discussing PSA testing with your GP is the first step towards safeguarding your prostate health. Detecting Prostate Cancer at an early stage leads to significantly improved outcomes in the overwhelming majority of cases.

EARLY DETECTION IS THE BEST PROTECTION

Staging and grading The test results will tell doctors more about the size of the tumour and if it has spread outside of the prostate. This is known as the 'staging' and 'grading' of the cancer. Knowing the stage and risk group of the cancer helps the individual and their doctor decide on the best treatment. Further information on staging and grading can be found at Macmillan Cancer Support (see link).

Coping with cancer There will be some practical issues somebody diagnosed with prostate cancer might need to consider. For example, having cancer can affect a person's housing and financial situation and they may be entitled to certain financial support through the state. Your Lodge Almoner can provide support during this time of need and provide a 'listening ear'. They can help you to talk about any issues and worries, and signpost further sources of specialist support.

Further information

The following organisations can offer support and guidance related to prostate cancer:

□ **Macmillan Cancer Support** Helps everyone with cancer live life as fully as they can, providing physical, financial and emotional support.

www.macmillan.org.uk/cancer-information-and-support/prostate-cancer

□ **Prostate Cancer UK** Improves the care and welfare of those affected by prostate cancer, increase investment in research, and raise public and political awareness.

www.prostatecanceruk.org.

□ **Cancer Research UK** A cancer research and awareness charity which aims to reduce the number of deaths from cancer.

www.cancerresearchuk.org/about-cancer/prostate-cancer

□ **NHS Choices** Thousands of articles, videos, tools and apps to help make choices about health and wellbeing.

www.nhs.uk/conditions/prostate-cancer

En Español

Mayo Clinic - note this is a US website

<https://www.mayoclinic.org/es/diseases-conditions/prostate-cancer/symptoms-causes/syc-20353087>.

Prostate Cancer Foundation - note this is a US website

<https://www.pcf.org/patient-support/informacion-en-espanol/>

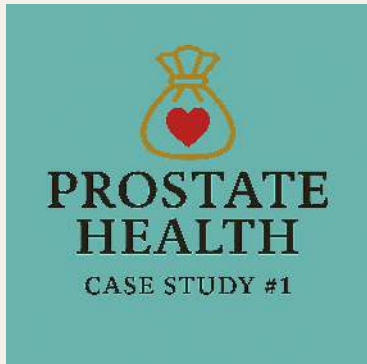
Hospital Oncológico en Valencia

<https://www.ivo.es/el-cancer/tipos-de-cancer/cancer-de-prostata/>.

EARLY DETECTION IS THE BEST PROTECTION

Real Life Stories

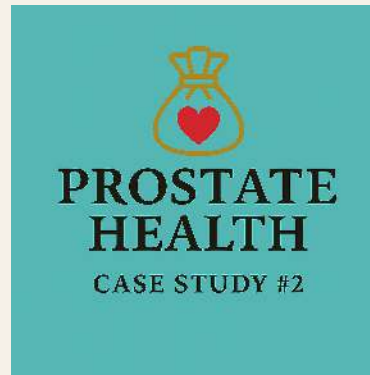
The following real life stories are about 3 brethren in the Province of Valencia. Each one illustrates the need to take medical advice on Prostate health and to undertake testing if appropriate.



Brother A (in his fifties at the time) knowing that his father had been diagnosed with Prostate Cancer, was shocked when his younger brother was also diagnosed with the disease.

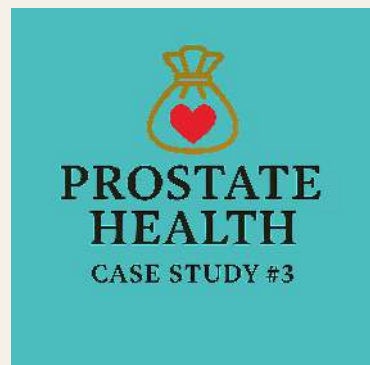
He sought advice from his doctor about having a PSA test. The doctor having ascertained that Brother A had none of the symptoms associated with Prostate Cancer advised against a PSA test at that time. In the Doctor's view, the potential risks from the test outweighed any benefit to the health outcome.

Brother A, now 10 years older and having developed some of the classic symptoms of an enlarged prostate, now sees a Urologist annually for a PSA test and an ultrasound scan.



Brother B made an appointment via the Pink Ladies (see below) for an ultrasound scan and PSA test. Both tests were clear for Prostate Cancer but the Urologist noticed an irregularity in Brother B's bladder.

Subsequent tests revealed this to be cancerous, and Brother B is now undergoing treatment for bladder cancer.



After a heart scare, Brother C began including a PSA test in every routine blood screen—despite no prostate symptoms or family history.

His PSA held around 2 for years, then spiked to 4 and 6 in 2023, prompting radiography, MRI scans and targeted biopsies. Prostate Cancer was diagnosed from the biopsy.

Deemed too high-risk for surgery, Brother C was treated with brachytherapy—a process which implants tiny radioactive beads via fine glass needles into the Prostate.

Two years on, his PSA has fallen to 0.4 and continues to decline. Brother C stresses that he had no warning signs and now urges everyone—including his two sons—to take medical advice on appropriate testing for Prostate Cancer.

EARLY DETECTION IS THE BEST PROTECTION

Where can I get advice on testing?

Here in Spain, brethren have lots of options to get further advice and to access testing for Prostate Cancer:

- Speak to your Lodge Almoner who has been trained to offer general advice and information on this subject.
- Make an appointment to see the Doctor at your local Health Centre.
- If you have private Medical Insurance, you may find that your cover includes access to private testing.
- The Province has made arrangements via the Pink Ladies (see below) to access discounted tests at the IMED Clinics in the Province of Valencia - ask your Lodge Almoner for further information.
- The majority of Private Hospitals offer a Prostate Screening programme.

The Pink Ladies

The Pink Ladies are a fund raising group based in the south of the Province. Their goals are to raise awareness of cancer and the support that is available both before and after diagnosis.

The Pink Ladies work with the Alicante Association for the Fight Against Cancer (AACC). Together they have made arrangements for subsidised testing services delivered in partnership with IMED Hospitals and across the Province.

For more information on the tests available and pricing, you can email the Pink Ladies on:

info@pink-ladies.org.

Provincial Grand Almoners

This guide is produced by:



W. Bro. Chris Ward
Provincial Grand Almoner



W. Bro. Kevin Hamilton
Deputy Provincial Grand Almoner



IMPORTANT NOTE: The Province of Valencia has compiled details of tests and cancer support organisations to help you weigh up your options. This article stresses that early detection is the best protection, but the final decision rests with you and your doctor. We do not endorse any specific test or organisation; our sole aim is to inform and encourage you to seek professional medical advice.

Version 1 - Published August 2025