Prostate Gland Enlargement Management Options

Brief Decision Aid

There are **three** options for the management of Prostate Gland enlargement:

- Watchful waiting (also known as 'monitoring' or 'self-help') when you decide not to use drugs or have surgery and may make some lifestyle changes.
- Medication taking tablets there are two different types.
- Surgery there are several types but the most common operations are trans-urethral resection of prostate (TURP) and laser techniques.

In making a decision you need to ask yourself - what is important to me? This leaflet and your health professional can tell you the evidence and give their suggestions but you need to make a decision that is right for you. What do you want to get from treatment?

You might like to think about:

- Do I want to wait for a while or am I keen to have something which will improve things quickly?
- Can I make the lifestyle changes recommended?
- Do I want to take tablets?
- What do I feel about side effects?
- Do I want an operation?

Benefits and risks of watchful waiting

Benefits and risks of watchful waiting				
Treatment Option	Benefits	Risks or Consequences		
Watchful waiting - including self help	There are no serious side effects.	Your symptoms may be severe enough that they are starting to affect		
measures such as: Avoiding alcohol and caffeine (particularly in the two hours before bed).	You can decide to have treatment later, if the symptoms worsen. You can improve mild symptoms by changing your lifestyle.	your lifestyle and wellbeing.		
Avoid getting constipated. Training your bladder to hold on longer - see www.patient.co.uk for more details.	For 100 men with severe symptoms, after four years of watchful waiting 2 men had mild symptoms 11 had improved to moderate symptoms 38 still had severe symptoms 39 had chosen surgery	For 100 men with moderate symptoms, after four years of watchful waiting 13 had improved and had mild symptoms 46 still had moderate symptoms 17 had developed severe symptoms 24 had chosen to have surgery		

Benefits and risks of medication

Benefits and risl	Benefits and risks of medication					
Treatment	Benefits	Risks or Consequences				
Option						
Medication: alpha blockers These	60 men every in 100 taking the treatment for three months will notice improvement.	40 men in every100 taking the medication will not improve.				
medicines relax the smooth muscle at the	Symptoms can improve within a week or so.	Symptoms can take up to six weeks to improve.				
outlet of the bladder.	Generally the more severe the symptoms the more you will notice improvement.	Possible side effects include: Slight drowsiness Headaches				
	Out of 100 men taking this medication for four years, 80 will have little or no side effects.	 Dizziness (due to drop in blood pressure) Lack of energy Ejaculation problems Nasal congestion (a blocked nose) Stomach upset Out of 100 men, about 20 stop taking the drug within four years because of side effects or lack of benefit. 				
Medication: 5 alpha reductase	Can reduce the symptoms of an enlarged prostate if taken for two years or more.	It may take many months to reach maximum effect.				
inhibitors These	About 60 in 100 men taking this medication for at least two years will	40 men in 100 will not improve.				
medicines reduce the level	notice an improvement.	Side effects are uncommon but about 5 in 100 men experience sexual				
of the hormone dihydrotestoster	Unwanted side effects usually reverse if you stop the medication.	problems including: Problems getting and keeping an				
-one in the prostate. This hormone causes the	It tends to be most effective in men with a large prostate and is usually only offered to those with a large prostate.	erection ■Less semen when you ejaculate ■A lower sex drive				
prostate to grow. Reducing the		Of 100 men taking the drug about 20 stop it within four years because of side effects or lack of benefit.				
amount, will cause the prostate to shrink by about						
20% of its						
volume. Medication:	About 70 of 100 men taking the	30 men in 100 will not improve on the				
combination	combination of both tablets for at least	combination.				
therapy (taking	two years will notice an improvement.					
alpha blockers	,	You may experience side effects of				
AND 5 alpha	Taking both types of tablets in	both tablets. In general, more men				
reductase	combination for at least four years can	experience side effects when taking				
inhibitors	reduce the risk of developing	the combination of both drugs. Fewer				
together)	complications such as acute urinary	men experience side effects when				
	retention (suddenly not being able to	taking just one drug.				
	pass water). This means you may be less likely to need surgery in the future.	Of 100 men taking the combination of				

	The greatest benefit is seen in men with severe symptoms, large prostates, and those who do not fully empty their bladders. A few studies show that 80 in 100 men with moderate symptoms taking the combination for at least two years can stop the alpha-blocker without getting worse symptoms afterwards. Those with severe symptoms or low flow rates need to keep taking both tablets.	drugs, about 20 stop within four years because of side effects. Experts and the NHS only recommend men to consider taking the combination of both drugs if they have a significantly enlarged prostate gland.
Medication: plant extracts such as Saw Palmetto	Few side effects.	The balance of evidence suggests that these drugs are not effective. They cannot be prescribed on the NHS.

Many people will opt to try medication before embarking on surgery and some surgeons are not keen to start on surgery unless medications have been tried.

Benefits and risks of surgery

Benefits and risks of surgery				
Treatment Option	Benefits	Risks or Consequences		
Surgery	It can improve your symptoms	20 men in 100 will not be very satisfied.		
This means	significantly. Of 100 men having			
removing the inner	surgery about 80 will be very	This option has the highest risk of		
part of the prostate	satisfied with the results of the	complications. Risks vary depending on		
gland.	operation.	the type of procedure.		
There are a number				
of ways of doing	This is the most effective treatment	Possible (reversible) side effects include:		
this and which one	for BPH.			
is offered may vary		■About 2 in 100 men having TURP will		
depending on the		need a blood transfusion. The risk is		
size of the prostate		much lower for laser procedures.		
and local services.				
		■5 in 100 men will get urinary retention		
Transurethral	TURP is the most common	(suddenly not being able to pass urine).		
resection of	operation available.			
prostate TURP.		■1 in 100 men having a TURP will get		
_		TUR syndrome (low sodium in the		
Transurethral	TUIP is used when the prostate	blood).		
incision of prostate	gland is only a little enlarged.			
TUIP.	There is less risk of retrograde	■Urine infection: 4 in 100.		
	ejaculation with this operation.			
1	1	Some side effects are irreversible:		
Laser	Laser can offer fewer side effects,	D		
prostatectomy.	less time in hospital (one night)	Retrograde ejaculation (when your		
	and less time with a catheter (tube	orgasms are dry or there is less semen		
	up the penis and into the bladder).	than usual, because the semen is		
	However it is felt to be only a small	forced back into your bladder). Out of		
	improvement and is not always	100 men having TURP 80-90 of them		

available. It is usually reserved for those with very large prostate glands.

*Urinary incontinence (not being able to control your bladder): between 2 and 7 men in 100 although some may have continence problems before surgery.

*Impotence or erection problems: between 5 and 10 in 100.

*Needing more surgery: about 5 in 100 after five years, 10 in 100 after 10 years.

*Death: this is very rare: about 1 in 1000 men having surgery

Brief Decision Aids are designed to help you answer three questions: Do I have options? What are the benefits and risks of these options, (and how likely are they)? How can we make a decision together that is right for me?