

## What happens once I've had my PSA test?

Your doctor may offer you further tests to decide whether you are likely to have prostate cancer. These could include:

- A questionnaire to find out whether you have any symptoms of an enlarged prostate gland.
- A urine test to rule out an infection of the bladder or prostate gland.
- A prostate examination. The doctor will insert their finger into your anus (bottom) in order to feel the size and shape of your prostate through the wall of your lower bowel.
- You might be advised to have a second PSA test 3-4 weeks later to see if the PSA level has changed.

If your doctor is concerned that you could have prostate cancer they will discuss referral to a surgeon for advice about further tests such as an MRI scan or prostate biopsies (using a thin needle to obtain small samples of tissue from the prostate). If your doctor is satisfied that you are unlikely to have prostate cancer then you may be offered follow up appointments and/or PSA tests to keep an eye on your prostate. You should ask your doctor about additional tests and treatment options if you are experiencing symptoms such as problems passing urine or sexual dysfunction.

## Where can I find more information?

Reliable information about prostate cancer and the PSA test is available online at the following websites:

<https://www.nhsinform.scot>

<https://www.prostatescotland.org.uk>

<https://www.prostatecanceruk.org>

<https://www.cancerresearchuk.org>

<https://patient.info/mens-health>

Request an appointment with your GP if you are still unsure whether or not to have a PSA test.

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**Orkney Prostate Awareness**

20 Bridge Street, Kirkwall, Orkney

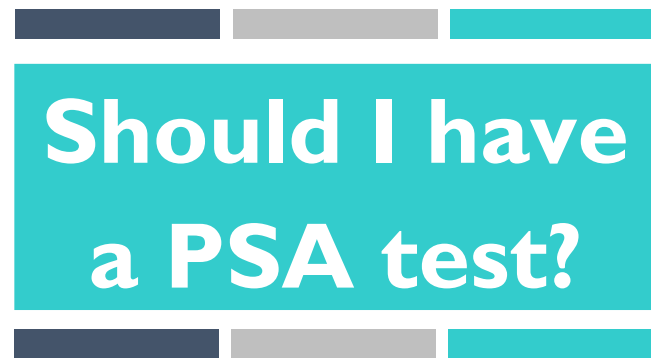
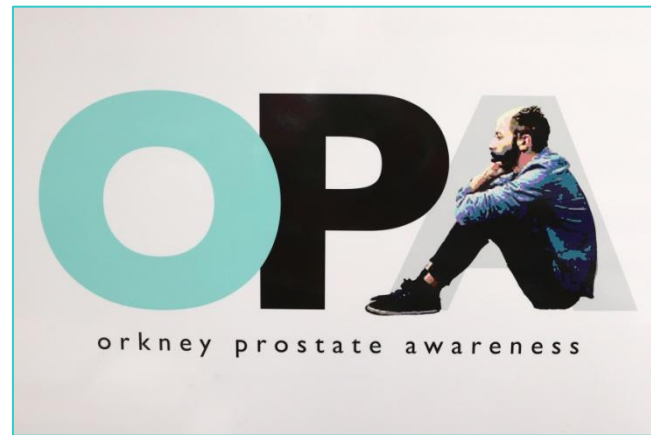
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Info@orkneyprostateawareness.co.uk



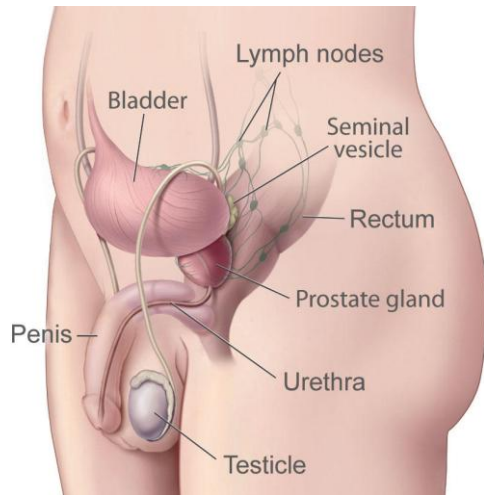
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## What is a PSA test?

The prostate specific antigen (PSA) test is a blood test that can help to diagnose prostate problems, including prostate cancer. It is not a perfect test. You should think carefully about the information in this leaflet before deciding whether to have a PSA test.



## What is prostate cancer?

The prostate gland lies just below the bladder and helps to produce healthy sperm. Prostate cancer is caused when cells inside the prostate grow out of control. Prostate cancer is the second most common cause of cancer deaths in UK men. Each year about 50,000 men are diagnosed with prostate cancer and about 12,000 men die from the disease. However, slow-growing prostate cancer is common and may never cause symptoms or shorten your life. More than 75% of men with prostate cancer survive with the disease for 10 or more years.

## What are the advantages of having a PSA test?

- ✓ A PSA test can help pick up prostate cancer before you have any symptoms. Most early prostate cancers do not have any symptoms.
- ✓ If you are found to have a fast growing cancer at an early stage, treatment could stop it spreading, making you unwell or shortening your life.

## What are the disadvantages of having a PSA test?

- ✗ The PSA test can miss prostate cancer. A small number of men with a low PSA level will later be found to have prostate cancer.
- ✗ Many men with a raised PSA level do not have prostate cancer. For these men, a raised PSA level could cause unnecessary worry or result in further tests that they do not need.
- ✗ Some men with a raised PSA level are diagnosed with a slow-growing cancer that is unlikely to ever cause them any problems or to shorten their life. For these men, being diagnosed with cancer could cause unnecessary worry. Some men will decide to have treatment that they probably do not need and which might cause side effects.

## Who is most at risk?

Prostate cancer is rare in men under 50 years old. The risk increases as you get older. You are at increased risk if you have a close relative (e.g. brother or father) with prostate cancer. Men of black ethnic origin are twice as likely as other men to get prostate cancer.

## How do I get a PSA test?

Contact your GP surgery for advice. Most doctors in Orkney would prefer to see you or speak to you on the telephone before arranging a PSA test to make sure that it is the right test for you. At busy times your doctor's receptionist might ask you for more information about your symptoms and concerns. This will help the doctor to decide how quickly you should be seen. You may be offered an appointment for a blood test without seeing a doctor first. If this happens you should make sure that you understand the information in this leaflet and have no unanswered questions before going ahead with the test.

- ✓ You should avoid having sex, masturbation or vigorous exercise (e.g. cycling) for 2 days before the test.
- ✓ You should wait for 1-2 weeks after having a prostate examination before having a PSA test.
- ✓ You should wait for 6 weeks after having a prostate biopsy or cystoscopy (insertion of a tube into the bladder to examine it with a camera) before having a PSA test.