



## UK NSC prostate cancer recommendation

Following a review of the evidence against strict criteria, the UK NSC does not currently recommend universal screening for prostate cancer.

The prostate is a small gland that lies below the bladder. It helps produce healthy sperm.

Prostate cancer happens when some cells start to grow out of control. Slow-growing prostate cancers are common. They may not cause any symptoms or shorten a man's life.

The risk of developing prostate cancer increases with age and is more common in men aged 50 or over. It is also more common in black men, those who have a family history, are overweight, or obese.

Prostate cancer is a major public health problem. It is the second-leading cause of cancer-related deaths among UK men. In 2011, there were 41,736 new diagnoses and 10,793 deaths from the disease.

Having a Prostate-Specific Antigen (PSA) blood screening test may help identify prostate cancers early. An abnormal PSA test can mean a man has prostate cancer but it can also mean that he does not have cancer.

### Key findings supporting the UK NSC recommendation

- evidence shows a benefit of prostate screening to reduce prostate cancer deaths by 21%. Despite this significant reduction, the major harms of treating men who incorrectly test positive still outweigh the benefits
- PSA is still a poor test for prostate cancer and a more specific and sensitive test is needed
- PSA is unable to distinguish between slow-growing and fast-growing cancers
- besides PSA, the current evidence does not support a population screening programme using any other test
- evaluation is currently taking place which could have the potential to improve the accuracy of PSA testing to identify men at greater risk for fast-growing prostate cancers

The UK NSC regularly reviews its recommendations on screening for different conditions in the light of new research evidence becoming available.

To find out more about the UK NSC's prostate cancer recommendation, please visit:

[legacy.screening.nhs.uk/prostatecancer](http://legacy.screening.nhs.uk/prostatecancer)

The UK National Screening Committee (UK NSC) advises ministers and the NHS in the 4 UK countries about all aspects of screening and supports implementation of screening programmes.

Find out more about the UK National Screening Committee at [www.gov.uk/government/groups/uk-national-screening-committee-uk-nsc](http://www.gov.uk/government/groups/uk-national-screening-committee-uk-nsc). The UK NSC evidence review process is described at [www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-nsc-evidence-review-process](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-nsc-evidence-review-process) and a list of all UK NSC recommendations can be found at [legacy.screening.nhs.uk/recommendations](http://legacy.screening.nhs.uk/recommendations)

The UK NSC secretariat is hosted by Public Health England ([www.gov.uk/phe](http://www.gov.uk/phe)).