

# KEEPING A HEALTHY, HAPPY PROSTATE

By Lawrence Clapp, Ph.D., J.D.

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*He's a lawyer with a penchant for helping, not suing. Lawrence Clapp jumped feet first into natural health eight years ago when he was diagnosed with prostate cancer. He knew there had to be a better way than surgery and chemotherapy and decided to find out for himself. His extensive research led to his own cure.*

*His subsequent book, **Prostate Health in 90 Days** (Hay Books), was written as a guide for men and women to improve not only their health but their lifestyles. His simple dietary approach to the problem of urinary tract health and layman's discussion of prostate function was so compelling, we decided to excerpt it here. -- Ed.*

We have a recent Western tradition of making gods out of doctors. Doctors are often backed by pharmaceutical companies. We all want to take a pill and go about our business, not consider anything else. It's been said that every illness is a message. I don't think anyone argues with that, but we all think we can wait and get that message later!

I talk about having a happy prostate. Not to detract from men who have no alternative, but for 99 percent of the male population, Viagra, is unnecessary! It is the same process to have an erection as to have a healthy prostate -- a good blood flow. Keep your prostate healthy and you won't have problems with erections!

Viagra is high on the continuum already for causing problems. We find with any miracle pills that it's only a matter of time before more serious side effects become known. Look at phen-fen and valium! A good, loving relationship and a healthy prostate are all that you need!

## **A look at the prostate**

The chestnut-shaped prostate sits right below the bladder and is wrapped around the urethra, but it has nothing to do with a man's urinary apparatus. The prostate happens to be where it is only because it's needed for ejaculation, and the ejaculate passes through the same urethra as the urine does. The prostate gland's primary job is to add special fluid to the sperm before it shoots out the penis during ejaculation. That's why the prostate sits below the bladder, and that's why prostate problems interfere with a man's ability to urinate and to have sex.

## **Prostate problems**

Three main types of problems - infection, enlargement, and cancer - can afflict the prostate. Prostate infections, called prostatitis, are fairly common in men from the teen years on. These infections can be brief or long-lasting, mild or severe, easy or difficult to treat. Symptoms of prostatitis can include frequent and/or painful urination, other urinary difficulties, or pain during sex.

Prostate enlargement, called benign prostatic hypertrophy, or BPH for short, is an unwanted but non-cancerous enlargement of the prostate. Although men in their 20s can suffer from BPH, it usually surfaces later in life. It's estimated that half of all men have BPH by the age of 60, and 90

percent will suffer from it by age 85. If the prostate enlarges outward, a man probably won't know he has BPH (unless it grows upward and pushes into the bladder). But if it swells inward, squeezing the urethra which passes through the center of the gland, he will know there's a problem. With the prostate squeezing down on the urinary tube, a man can suffer from hesitancy in urinating, straining to start the stream, dribbling of urine before and after urinating, frequent urination, getting up several times at night to urinate, or urgency of urination.

## **Medical treatment**

The principal medical "solution" to BPH symptoms is the non-invasive surgery called TURP (transurethral resection of the prostate), also referred to as reaming out the prostate. There are drugs such as Proscar to shrink the prostate, but they have not been very effective and have objectionable side effects.

The one quasi-medical approach that really does work was banned by the FDA in 1990. This approach was pioneered in a 1958 study by Drs. Feinblatt and Gant, and subsequent studies confirmed its effectiveness. BPH was shown to be reduced in 77 to 92 percent of cases by capsules containing amino acids, glycine, alanine, and glutamic acid. This combination is available in several prostate supplements found in health food stores. There are no known side effects. If you have BPH symptoms, find one of these formulas that works for you while you do the cleansing to become truly healthy so that you won't need these formulas anymore.

## **Prostate cancer**

Although prostatitis and BPH can, in advanced cases, be quite dangerous, the most serious prostate problem is cancer. Cancer of the prostate is the second most frequently diagnosed cancer in males (after skin cancer), and the second most frequent cause of cancer death in males (after lung cancer). Approximately 200,000 American men will get the unhappy diagnosis of prostate cancer this year alone - and 38,000 will die of the disease. As was true in my case, men usually don't know that they have prostate cancer for quite some time after the malignancy takes root, because it produces no symptoms in its early stages of growth. In fact, often there are no symptoms at all, or only very minor ones that can easily be overlooked. The early symptoms of prostate cancer are very similar to those of BPH, including getting up frequently at night to urinate; urinating frequently, but often only in small amounts; having to wait longer for the urine flow to begin; and a urinary stream that starts and stops. Having these symptoms does not mean that you have prostate cancer. But if you do have these or other symptoms, it's best to get yourself checked.

## **Causes of cancer**

Many things can turn a healthy prostate cancerous, including poor diet, emotional distress, muscular pressure, stress, family history, exposure to various toxins, environmental factors, radiation, sex life, general lifestyle, and even the type of clothing you wear. BPH is often a precursor to prostate cancer, and should be treated as quickly as possible. All these possible causes share one thing in common: They restrict the flow of blood and oxygen to the prostate. Without life-giving oxygen and the numerous nutrients in the blood, prostate cells are bound to go bad.

Diet, long ignored by modern medicine, was finally recognized as a major cause of prostate cancer in 1982 when the National Research Council's report, Diet, Nutrition and Cancer, strongly linked

dietary factors to prostate, breast, and colon cancer. Fat was identified as the major culprit, causing hormonal imbalances that are known to clog the tiny blood vessels of the prostate and encourage cancer.

Among both black and white men studied, the major dietary risk factor for prostate cancer was a high intake of fat, especially among black men. Histories of sexual behavior, cigarette smoking, and occupational exposure to cadmium were not found to be significant predictors of increased risk.

This theory, that a high-fat diet puts men at an increased risk of prostate cancer, is supported by a comparison of black men living in America, with the highest rate of prostate cancer in the world, and black men living in Africa, with one of the lowest rates of prostate cancer in the world. Clearly, the American and African blacks have the same genes, so we can't blame genetics. But their diets are different. The U.S. diet is very high in fat; the African diet is much lower. And when black men in Africa move to the United States and adopt the standard American diet, their risk of developing prostate cancer jumps tenfold.

Emotions are another largely ignored cause of prostate cancer. Our unreleased emotions create energy and eventually physical blockages, called adhesions, which hamper circulation. The muscles become rigid in order to keep the emotions suppressed. This process is evident in sore and nonfunctional muscles, which eventually become calcified if circulation is not restored.

Stress, particularly chronic or long-lasting stress, is especially damaging to the prostate. Stress causes all areas of the body to tighten up, restricting the flow of blood and energy.

As the stress continues, the tension and restriction grow cumulatively worse. The prostate, an emotional center which relies on tiny blood vessels for nutrition and cleansing, is severely damaged by tension caused by years of stressful living. This damage sets the stage for prostate enlargement and eventually cancer.

General lifestyle also contributes to the health or illness of your prostate. Exercise promotes circulation and relieves tension in the body, which greatly facilitates a healthy prostate. "Uptight" men have a higher incidence of prostate cancer, again related to the flow of blood in those tiny arteries.

## **Food supplements**

Like every other part of the body, the prostate needs a steady supply of vitamins, minerals, amino acids, carbohydrates, and essential fatty acids, as well as enzymes, phytochemicals, and other substances found in food.

Ideally, we would get all the nutrients and phytochemicals we need from food.

Unfortunately, many of us begin with a nutrient deficit because our agriculture system is designed to produce good-looking items that don't spoil on the way to the market instead of nutrient-packed, healthful foods. On top of that, we need even more nutrients when we become ill or are exposed to toxins. That's why we must turn to supplements. But not any supplements will do. Liquid and homeopathic supplements are much easier for our bodies to process, and they are more readily absorbed.

In addition to supplements that help with overall health and herbal formulas that internally cleanse the body, it's important to take supplements that specifically benefit the prostate. These include:

- ***Avena sativa***: Rich in calcium mucin and silicic acid, *avena sativa* tones the nervous system, lifts the spirits, soothes inflamed internal tissues, and heals internal wounds.
- ***Green tea***: The catechins found in green tea are the likely "medicines" for the prostate, although it is not known exactly how they prevent or combat existing prostate cancer.
- ***Kelp***: This seaweed is rich in iodine and contains minerals that help to prevent and treat prostate cancer.
- ***Nettles***: Nettles contain vitamin C, iron, and other nutrients that strengthen the prostate. It can be taken in the form of a pill, tea, tincture, snuff, or wash.
- ***Pygeum***: Extracted from an African evergreen tree, this herb has been used to treat diseases of the prostate and urinary tract for many years. Popular in Europe, it has been shown to shrink enlarged prostates in many double-blind studies.
- ***Saw palmetto***: This herb is known to shrink enlarged prostates and to lower PSA. Some studies have found that this herb is far more effective than the drug Proscar without the side effects and expense.
- ***Zinc***: Often low in men with prostate problems, this mineral is a major component of ejaculate. A "jack of all trades," zinc strengthens the memory and immune system, is vital for reproduction and strong bones, and regulates both blood cholesterol and sugar.

## **Dietary recommendations**

**Here are some additional tips to help you round out your healthful diet:**

Do eat lots of fresh vegetables and fruits.

Do eat legumes (peas, beans, and lentils).

Do eat fresh fish. It contains essential fatty acids the body uses to produce prostaglandins, which are hormone — like substances that help to regulate pain and keep the immune system strong. Fish from cold ocean waters (such as salmon, sardines, mackerel, and cod) have large amounts of key fatty acids.

DO eat whole grain in moderation, rather than refined (white) breads, pasta, crackers, rice, and other grains.

DO choose organically grown foods whenever it's possible.

Don't eat fatty meats. Excessively high-fat diets have been linked to prostate cancer, other cancers, heart disease, and numerous other ailments.

Don't eat refined sugars (cakes, pastries, candy, Jell-O, white bread, sugary sauces).

Don't add salt to your food, and avoid salty foods.

Don't eat hydrogenated oils, such as those found in margarine, donuts, cookies, cakes, other desserts, potato chips, and other deep-fried foods.

Don't eat canned, packaged, or otherwise processed foods.

Don't drink sodas, alcohol, black teas (which includes most iced teas), or coffee.

Don't eat or drink dairy foods, especially if they have been pasteurized. Consumption of dairy products is closely linked in America to prostate cancer.

Don't drink liquids with meals, or just before or after meals. Liquids dilute the digestive enzymes, resulting in poor digestion, fewer nutrients being made available to the body, and more strain on the the system.