

Urology Services Prostate Cancer Active Surveillance



Western Health

What is active surveillance?

Active surveillance is a way of monitoring prostate cancer that hasn't spread outside of the prostate gland (localized prostate cancer).

Not all men who have prostate cancer require treatment. Active surveillance allows the Urology team to monitor your cancer closely with the intention to treat if there is any change in your cancer.

Who is suitable for active surveillance?

To be eligible men should meet the following criteria:

- Blood test - PSA (Protein specific antigen) below 10.
- Gleason score of 6 (low grade on biopsy).
- Low volume cancer on biopsy.
- Low volume on MRI prostate.
- Localized to prostate.

You must be fit and willing to follow an active surveillance schedule; and have active treatment, should your cancer progress.

What is involved in active surveillance?

You will have regular tests to monitor your cancer. The tests you have and how often will depend on your Urology doctor. These are likely to include:

- Regular PSA check.
- MRI prostate if concerns for progression.
- Repeat Biopsy.
- Digital Rectal exam.

These tests are aimed at finding any changes in your cancer that would suggest the cancer is growing. If changes are found, you will be referred for active treatment with either surgery or radiotherapy.

What are the advantages?

As you won't have treatment while you're on active surveillance, you'll avoid the side effects of treatment.

Active surveillance won't affect your everyday life as much as treatment would.

If tests show that your cancer might be growing, there are treatments available that aim to cure your cancer.

What are the disadvantages?

You might need to have more prostate biopsies which can cause side effects, and which some men find uncomfortable or painful.

Your cancer might grow more quickly than expected and become harder to treat – but this is very uncommon.

Your general health could change, which might make some treatments unsuitable for you if you did need them.

Some men may worry about not having treatment, and about their cancer growing, although many men find they can get on with their daily lives between appointments.

Can I change my mind and have treatment?

Some men decide they want treatment for their prostate cancer even though there are no signs of changes.

If you decide you would prefer active treatment, you can speak to your doctor or nurse.

Follow up Care

Deciding whether or not to go on active surveillance is a personal choice. There is usually no rush to make a decision. Speak to your GP, Urology team or Prostate Cancer Nurse.

The Prostate Cancer Nursing Service provides support and education to all men diagnosed with prostate cancer and their families.

To discuss your diagnosis and active surveillance with a Western Health Prostate Cancer Specialist Nurse who is available Monday – Friday 8-4.30pm.

.

Contact Us?

Prostate Cancer Nurse – 0411 853 290

Booking enquiries - 8345 6541

General enquiries - 8345 6666

.

The Australian Charter of Healthcare Rights describes the rights of all people who use the Australian healthcare system. Copies of the charter in community languages are available near the main entrance of all Western Health hospitals, or ask a staff member or volunteer.

For more information, visit www.safetyandquality.gov.au/australian-charter-healthcare-rights



Author: Prostate Cancer Specialist Nurse, Urology Department
Date: January 2020
Next Review: January 2021
Version Control: v1



This material has been developed in partnership with Western Health consumers.

