

# SEE YOUR DOCTOR

## Dealing With A Common Problem

(NAPSA)—What some men consider a normal part of aging is actually a treatable condition known as enlarged prostate (EP). EP affects more than 50 percent of men 50 years of age and older and it affects 90 percent of men by age 80! In the U.S. alone there were an estimated 6.4 million visits to a physician for EP in the year 2000.

What EP Does:

EP causes changes in urinary habits because of its location around the urethra, the tube that carries urine from the bladder out of the body. Symptoms of EP vary, but the most common include frequent and urgent urination; a weak or interrupted urine stream; and getting up to urinate more often at night. It is recommended that men over the age of 50 have an annual physical, including a prostate exam.

Despite its prevalence, some men still lack knowledge about the condition. A recent survey conducted found that only 10% of undiagnosed men are very familiar with the signs and symptoms of an enlarged prostate. Also, more than half of men surveyed (56%) believe that having EP increases their risk for prostate cancer, when in fact, enlarged prostate has not been found to increase the risk of prostate cancer.

The survey also showed a significant gap between what doctors say they are telling patients and what patients recall being told, especially regarding treatment options. For example, most doctors surveyed reported that they told their patients with EP that medication can reduce the risk of

surgery, but only one out of four patients surveyed recall discussing treatment options with their doctor. The vast majority of doctors surveyed also said they normally tell patients with enlarged prostate that surgery may be needed, but only about one-third of patients recall having this discussion.

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Aside from this disconnect between patients and their physicians, the results of the survey also found that most men with EP (63%) believe prostate problems are a normal part of aging that cannot be helped. Many find ways to cope with the condition by making lifestyle adjustments, like mapping out the locations of public restrooms before leaving the house. The good news is that men just don't have to live with the bothersome symptoms or long-term effects of EP. In addition to treating the symptoms, there are medications that can help shrink an enlarging prostate and improve urinary symptoms.

For more information about EP, available treatment options and the survey, visit [www.prostatecare.com](http://www.prostatecare.com). If you think you might have an enlarged prostate, be sure to talk to your doctor.