

PROSTATE CANCER AFRICA

PROSTATE CANCER: DIAGNOSIS AND WHAT COMES NEXT

About prostate cancer diagnosis

- A diagnosis of prostate cancer can only be made as a result of **a prostate biopsy**, when the doctor takes samples of tissue from your prostate.

What the biopsy results can tell you

- They can tell you how aggressive your prostate cancer is (the **grade** of the cancer).
- They can tell you how widely spread the cancer is within your prostate (the **clinical stage**).
- Together with the results of your PSA test and your physical exam, they can help you and your doctor know what to do next.

Important things you will need to know

- Do I have a relatively low grade cancer (Gleason grade 2 to 6)?
- Do I have a relatively high grade of cancer (Gleason grade 7 to 10)?
- Does the doctor think your cancer is confined to your prostate (**localized**)?
- Does the doctor think your cancer has spread to nearby tissues (**locally advanced**)?
- Does the doctor think your cancer has spread to other parts of your body (**metastasized**)?

Other things that may affect your treatment

- Your age (how long you are going to live)
- Your general health and other diseases (e.g., diabetes, heart disease)
- Your decisions about what you want to do

Basic options for treatment

EARLY STAGE DISEASE

Common forms of therapy for early stage prostate cancer include:

- Regular monitoring without actual treatment (**active surveillance** or **watchful waiting**)
- Surgical removal of the prostate (**radical prostatectomy**)
- **Radiation therapy** to kill the cancer

LOCALLY ADVANCED DISEASE

Therapies for prostate cancer that has spread to nearby tissues include:

- Regular monitoring without actual treatment (**active surveillance** or **watchful waiting**)
- **Radiation therapy** to kill the cancer, usually in combination with **hormone therapy**

ADVANCED AND METASTATIC DISEASE

Common therapies for advanced prostate cancer that has spread to other parts of the body are:

- Regular monitoring without actual treatment (for patients who have no symptoms)
- **Chemotherapy** (with a drug called docetaxel) that can extend survival
- **Hormonal therapy**, which can relieve the symptoms of advanced disease

No known treatments can cure patients with advanced forms of prostate cancer. However, men with advanced prostate cancer may live with their disease for many years, and do not necessarily die from it.