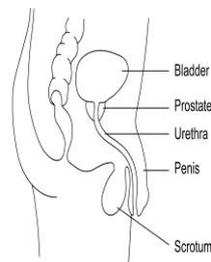


**Benign Prostatic Hypertrophy (BPH)** is a non-cancerous swelling of the prostate an organ found only in men. The prostate is part of the male reproductive system.

**The prostate** is an organ found only in men. It is the size and shape of a plum and is found just below the bladder. When a man ejaculates sperm it is believed the prostate releases some of this fluid. When you pass water your urine flows from the bladder along a tube (urethra) and out through the penis.

As a man gets older the prostate grows. This is part of the normal ageing process. As the prostate grows it can squeeze the urethra making the flow of urine more difficult.



**PSA** Prostate specific antigen is a substance released by the prostate cells Very little PSA is released from a healthy prostate into the blood stream but certain conditions can cause a higher level of PSA.

### Signs and Symptoms

- difficulty in passing urine. Urine flow begins to slow and can take several minute
- A sudden urge to pass urine which can be difficult to control
- you may notice you have to go to the toilet more often
- the bladder may overflow, causing leakage

### Treatments

- Mild symptoms which do not bother you may not need treatment. Your condition may need to be monitored every 6 months – 1 year
- There are certain drugs which can improve symptoms. Alpha blockers work by relaxing the prostate and bladder neck and anti-cholinergics help to relieve the urgency felt to pass urine
- a sudden inability to pass urine may require a tube to be inserted via the urethra into the bladder to drain the urine
- Surgery involves the removing of the prostate tissue. The most common procedure is a TURP

**Phototherapy.** Plant extracts are commonly used on the continent as a treatment for BPH with mild symptoms. The most commonly used are Beta-sitosterol and saw palmetto containing plants. Until phytotherapies have been adequately investigated and for longer durations a wholesale recommendation for their use cannot be made.