

# LIFESTYLE AND PROSTATE PROBLEMS

Mr George Yardy  
Consultant Urological Surgeon



In men who have difficulties with their waterworks, the problem is frequently due to benign enlargement of the prostate. On the other hand, the incidence of prostate cancer continues to rise – it is now the most commonly detected male cancer and about 1 in 8 men will be diagnosed with it in their lifetime (prostatecancer.uk.org). Prostate cancer is now being given more prominence, with several men in the public eye talking about their treatment in recent months, and the government announcing increases in funding for research into new tests and treatments.

Nuffield Health Ipswich Hospital's Consultant Urological Surgeon Mr George Yardy is frequently asked if there are any alterations that men can make to their lifestyle to improve their urinary symptoms, decrease their risk of developing prostate cancer or improve their outlook if they have already been diagnosed with this condition. Here, he gives some advice on such questions.

## Symptoms due to enlarged prostate

"Some men who notice that they take longer to go to the toilet or go more frequently find that they can tolerate this if they can be checked over, given an explanation of the cause of their symptoms and reassured that the problem is not due to anything more serious. Others seek medication or surgery, but men often prefer to avoid, or at least delay these and there are various lifestyle changes which can help. Fluid intake can be reduced at specific times during the day with the aim of reducing urinary frequency when most inconvenient. A specialist physiotherapist can advise about "bladder training" to reduce urinary urgency as well as distraction techniques, double voiding and other manoeuvres to improve bladder emptying. For men who are on medication for other problems their treatment can be reviewed to change them onto drugs with fewer urinary effects. For example, men on water tablets can find that if they take them in the afternoon then they need to go to the toilet less often overnight".

## Exercise

"We do not know whether physical activity can prevent prostate cancer, but some studies suggest that it lowers the risk. It is recommended to aim for a total of 150 minutes of moderate exercise spread over a week. This may decrease side effects from treatment and also improves mood".

## Red meat / animal fat

"Although controversial, there are studies that indicate that a high intake of red meat, particularly cooked at high temperatures or processed meat, increases the risk of aggressive prostate cancer. Animal fat may also be a risk factor".

## Milk

"Earlier this year an American study of over 1,300 men with prostate cancer monitored for eight years observed that men consuming more than four servings per week of whole milk had a higher chance of recurrence than those consuming less than three servings per month. Previous studies have also highlighted an apparent link between high consumption of dairy foods and prostate cancer. There are theories about interplay between insulin resistance, saturated fat intake and inflammation affecting the behaviour of prostate cancer in overweight men. This supports the recommendation to swap to lower-fat dairy options, increase exercise and consume a Mediterranean-style diet".

## Wine

"There is accumulating evidence over some years that polyphenols in red wine may have a protective effect. A meta-analysis (summary of multiple research studies) published this May indicated that moderate regular consumption of red wine decreased the risk of developing prostate cancer".

## Diet – vegetables

"Brassicas, including cabbage, cauliflower, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, kale and oilseed rape, contain various glucosinolates, which have antioxidant and cancer-preventive effects.

Researchers at the John Innes Institute in Norwich have been investigating the effect of "Super Broccoli" which has particularly high levels of the sulforaphane Glucoraphanin. They are looking at the effect of such compounds on prostate cancer cells at the molecular level as well as assessing the benefits of consuming their broccoli in men affected by prostate cancer. One study required men to consume regular doses of liquidised broccoli although it is perhaps not essential to go to these lengths to derive benefit. Super Broccoli is available from supermarkets now – check the label!

Tomatoes contain high levels of lycopene – another compound which appears to have a protective effect. However, it is absorbed into the bloodstream better when tomatoes are processed or prepared with oils, such as in ketchup, pizza or pasta sauces".

In the simplest terms, Mr Yardy advises "most of the lifestyle factors such as dietary changes and exercise, which are known to be good for the heart, blood pressure, the bowel and so on, are also likely to be helpful for the prostate – with a little extra help (in moderation, we have to say) available to us men at the wine shop!"

Mr George Yardy is a Consultant Urological Surgeon with a private practice at Nuffield Health Ipswich Hospital. He works in the NHS at the Ipswich Hospital NHS Trust and Aldeburgh Community Hospital. Mr Yardy undertook research into prostate cancer at the Weatherall Institute of Molecular Medicine, Oxford, and trained in urology in Cambridge and Norwich. He has an established practice performing a wide range of urological procedures. His specialist interests are in testing for prostate cancer (including multiparametric MRI scanning and transperineal prostate biopsy), prostate surgery, microsurgical vasectomy reversal, and female bladder problems (including urinary infection and bladder Botox injections).

**For more information on how to book a private appointment with Mr Yardy, call us now on 01473 851 960. [www.nuffieldhealth.com](http://www.nuffieldhealth.com)**