



MEDIA RELEASE
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No need to fear: The change to prostate testing guidelines men need to know about

GPs are being urged to step up prostate cancer conversations as new testing guidelines roll out across Australia removing a common fear that prevented some men from getting checked.

Experts from the [Urological Society of Australia and New Zealand](#) (USANZ) say men may have previously put off being checked for prostate cancer because they were worried about getting a digital rectal exam - a practice that was deliberately left out of new testing guidelines.

Australia is the first country in the world to adopt an evidence-based approach towards prostate cancer testing removing fear and confusion that may have prevented men from being checked.

"The rectal examination is no longer there, it's now a simple blood test, just like when you have a blood test for any other illness," said USANZ Leadership Team member Associate Professor Weranja Ranasinghe.

"A lot of people choose not to discuss prostate cancer because the rectal prostate examination has been part of it, but that's not the case anymore," he added.

"Changes towards how some low-risk cases are treated through monitoring instead of surgery are also designed to help men afraid of serious side effects such as incontinence and erectile dysfunction."

"One of the biggest outcomes we're looking for from the new guidelines is to strengthen patient awareness," said Assoc. Prof. Ranasinghe.

"It's really about empowering people to know their risk, raise awareness and encourage GP's to talk to their patients about having a PSA test done," he said.

Prostate cancer is the most commonly diagnosed cancer in Australia, and it accounts for about one third of all new male cancer cases each year.

Nearly 29,000 men were diagnosed in 2025, and there were around 4,000 prostate cancer-related deaths in that year.

“While there is a strong survival rate, this relies on early detection and personalised treatment, which should improve under the new guidelines.”

The new prostate cancer testing guidelines establish a national framework for PSA testing, risk assessment, and diagnostic pathways to detect clinically significant prostate cancer earlier. They are also designed to reduce unnecessary tests and treatment.

Some of the guidelines key recommendations for testing and treatment are:

- Updated recommendations for men with significant family history and inherited genetic risk.
- New guidance for high-risk men and priority populations
- Support for the routine use of MRI before biopsy.
- And, a framework to earlier detect clinically significant prostate cancer while minimising unnecessary harms.

“Early detection is all about awareness and then picking up clinically relevant cancers,” said Assoc Prof Ranasinghe.

“With patients who are investigated further, the first step is getting an MRI and then we would only biopsy patients that have something abnormal on their MRI,” he added.

“This awareness program will allow us to identify patients that need a biopsy and then in those that do, biopsies can be done in a much safer manner than previously,” he said.

About Urological Society of Australia and New Zealand

The Urological Society of Australia and New Zealand is the peak professional body for urological surgeons in Australia and New Zealand. Urologists are surgeons who treat men, women and children with problems involving the kidney, bladder, prostate and male reproductive organs. These conditions include cancer, stones, infection, incontinence, urination difficulties, sexual dysfunction and pelvic floor problems. <https://www.usanz.org.au/>