

Prostate Specific Antigen (PSA) Test

Prostate cancer is a serious condition. The prostate specific antigen (PSA) test is a blood test to see if you might have prostate cancer and to monitor treatment for prostate cancer.

The PSA blood level is also increased in other conditions. So having an increased PSA test result does not mean that you have prostate cancer. Experts disagree on how useful the PSA test is. There is a lot of ongoing research about PSA. At the moment there is no national screening programme for prostate cancer in the UK

What is a PSA test?

The PSA test is a blood test that measures the level of PSA in your blood. PSA is made by the prostate gland. The PSA level in your blood stream is measured in nanograms per millilitre (ng/ml.)

What is a normal result?

PSA cut-off values	
Age (years)	PSA cut-off
40-49	2.7
50-59	3.9
60-69	5.0
70-75	7.2

The PSA test can also miss cancer. About 15 in every 100 men who have a normal PSA level do have a prostate cancer. A one-off test is not reliable and repeating the test may provide important information.

If you require a PSA test the GP will give you a digital rectal examination to feel the prostate. This is to find out if the prostate is enlarged or feels abnormal in any way.

Do I need a PSA test?

If you have concerns about your prostate, for example:

- increased need to pass urine at night
- dribbling
- difficulty passing urine
- blood in urine

Please see a GP to discuss your symptoms.