

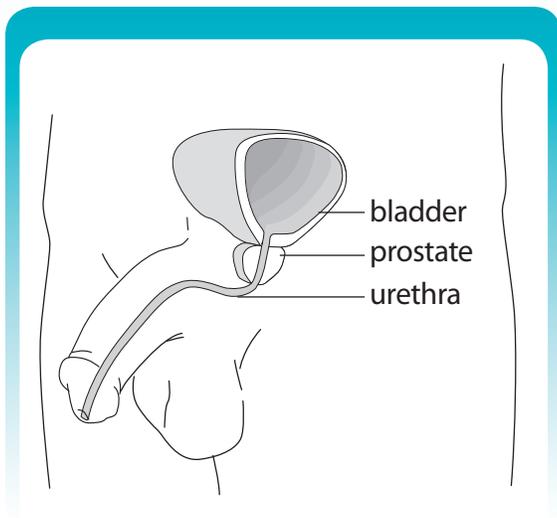


## Prostate ultrasound and biopsies

Prostate ultrasound examination and biopsies are useful in investigating suspected cases of prostate cancer.

**Y**ou have been found to have an abnormality of the prostate gland or a high PSA blood test result. Prostate ultrasound examination and biopsies have been recommended to determine the possibility of prostate cancer.

The prostate is a small gland, normally the size of a chestnut, located below the bladder and surrounding the urinary passage (urethra). Its function is to secrete part of the semen produced at ejaculation.



Prostate cancer normally grows slowly until it becomes detectable by finger examination of the prostate — digital rectal examination (DRE) — or by an abnormal blood test reading of the prostate specific antigen (PSA) level.

The abnormality found at a DRE or the elevation in the PSA level may be due to a prostatic problem other than cancer, such as infection or non-cancerous prostatic enlargement.

### The examination

Transrectal ultrasound (TRUS) examination involves passing a narrow probe through the anus into the rectum, much like a DRE. Prostate ultrasound imaging allows the examiner to measure the prostate size and assess its texture. Biopsies (tissue samples) are obtained using a spring-loaded device that passes a thin needle into the prostate through the lining of the rectum. Although you will be aware of the biopsy procedure, there is generally not significant pain. Normally, multiple biopsies are obtained from different locations within the prostate.

The tissue removed at biopsy is preserved and will be examined under a microscope to determine if prostate cancer is present. This report should be available within a few weeks.

The risk of bleeding is increased in patients taking blood thinners, anti-inflammatory medications and many herbal supplements. These drugs should normally be stopped prior to the procedure. Most doctors recommend that you avoid **aspirin or anti-inflammatory drugs** for one week prior to your biopsy procedure. If you are taking the blood-thinners such as *warfarin* (Coumadin®), *clopidogrel* (Plavix®), or *dabigatran* (Pradax®), **you must ask your urologist for specific instructions.**

Antibiotic drugs have been prescribed for you to prevent infection after the biopsies. Please take all of the pills as directed by your urologist. You may be prescribed an enema to cleanse your bowels before the procedure.

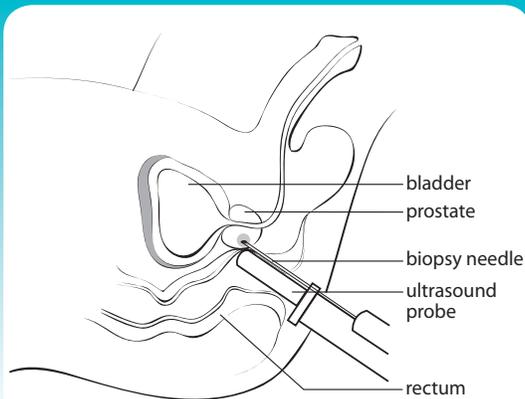
A urologist or ultrasound specialist will carry out your examination. You will be asked to lie on your side on a stretcher. Local anesthetic may be used to “freeze” the prostate. The ultrasound probe will then be introduced through the anus into the rectum to view the prostate as the biopsies are performed.

*Continued on next page*

# Prostate ultrasound and biopsies

The entire examination takes about 15 minutes after which you will be allowed to leave. You may be asked to arrange for someone to accompany you home after your examination.

## Ultrasound examination of the prostate through the rectum



## Risks and complications

It is not unusual to see a bit of blood in the urine and stool for a day or two after prostate biopsies. You may detect blood in the semen for several weeks.

When preventive antibiotics are taken properly after prostate biopsies, infection is unusual. Contact your doctor if you experience persistent burning with urination, or difficulty voiding. **Immediate medical attention is required if you develop a high fever or chills.**

## Follow-up

Please arrange to meet with your urologist \_\_\_\_\_ week(s) after your prostate ultrasound and biopsies so that the results can be discussed with you in person.

## Your prostate examination has been scheduled for:

Day: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Please contact your urologist if you have not been informed of your prostate ultrasound appointment date within two weeks.

*This publication is produced by*

Canadian **U**rological Association  
The Voice of Urology in *Canada*



Association des **U**rologues du Canada  
La voix de l'urologie au *Canada*

The information in the publication is not intended to convey medical advice or to substitute for direct consultation with a qualified medical practitioner. The Canadian Urological Association disclaims all liability and legal responsibility howsoever caused, including negligence, for the information contained in or referenced by this brochure.

© 2014. Canadian Urological Association. All rights reserved.

[cua.org](http://cua.org)