

Benefits and risks of medication

Treatment Option	Benefits	Risks or Consequences
<p>Medication: alpha blockers These medicines relax the smooth muscle at the outlet of the bladder.</p>	<p>60 men every in 100 taking the treatment for three months will notice improvement.</p> <p>Symptoms can improve within a week or so.</p> <p>Generally the more severe the symptoms the more you will notice improvement.</p> <p>Out of 100 men taking this medication for four years, 80 will have little or no side effects.</p>	<p>40 men in every 100 taking the medication will not improve.</p> <p>Symptoms can take up to six weeks to improve.</p> <p>Possible side effects include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Slight drowsiness ▪ Headaches ▪ Dizziness (due to drop in blood pressure) ▪ Lack of energy ▪ Ejaculation problems ▪ Nasal congestion (a blocked nose) ▪ Stomach upset <p>Out of 100 men, about 20 stop taking the drug within four years because of side effects or lack of benefit.</p>
<p>Medication: 5 alpha reductase inhibitors These medicines reduce the level of the hormone dihydrotestosterone in the prostate. This hormone causes the prostate to grow. Reducing the amount, will cause the prostate to shrink by about 20% of its volume.</p>	<p>Can reduce the symptoms of an enlarged prostate if taken for two years or more.</p> <p>About 60 in 100 men taking this medication for at least two years will notice an improvement.</p> <p>Unwanted side effects usually reverse if you stop the medication.</p> <p>It tends to be most effective in men with a large prostate and is usually only offered to those with a large prostate.</p>	<p>It may take many months to reach maximum effect.</p> <p>40 men in 100 will not improve.</p> <p>Side effects are uncommon but about 5 in 100 men experience sexual problems including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Problems getting and keeping an erection ▪ Less semen when you ejaculate ▪ A lower sex drive <p>Of 100 men taking the drug about 20 stop it within four years because of side effects or lack of benefit.</p>
<p>Medication: combination therapy (taking alpha blockers AND 5 alpha reductase inhibitors together)</p>	<p>About 70 of 100 men taking the combination of both tablets for at least two years will notice an improvement.</p> <p>Taking both types of tablets in combination for at least four years can reduce the risk of developing complications such as acute urinary retention (suddenly not being able to pass water). This means you may be less likely to need surgery in the future.</p>	<p>30 men in 100 will not improve on the combination.</p> <p>You may experience side effects of both tablets. In general, more men experience side effects when taking the combination of both drugs. Fewer men experience side effects when taking just one drug.</p> <p>Of 100 men taking the combination of</p>

	<p>The greatest benefit is seen in men with severe symptoms, large prostates, and those who do not fully empty their bladders.</p> <p>A few studies show that 80 in 100 men with moderate symptoms taking the combination for at least two years can stop the alpha-blocker without getting worse symptoms afterwards. Those with severe symptoms or low flow rates need to keep taking both tablets.</p>	<p>drugs, about 20 stop within four years because of side effects.</p> <p>Experts and the NHS only recommend men to consider taking the combination of both drugs if they have a significantly enlarged prostate gland.</p>
<p>Medication: plant extracts such as Saw Palmetto</p>	<p>Few side effects.</p>	<p>The balance of evidence suggests that these drugs are not effective. They cannot be prescribed on the NHS.</p>

Many people will opt to try medication before embarking on surgery and some surgeons are not keen to start on surgery unless medications have been tried.

Benefits and risks of surgery

Treatment Option	Benefits	Risks or Consequences
<p>Surgery This means removing the inner part of the prostate gland. There are a number of ways of doing this and which one is offered may vary depending on the size of the prostate and local services.</p> <p>Transurethral resection of prostate TURP.</p> <p>Transurethral incision of prostate TUIP.</p> <p>Laser prostatectomy.</p>	<p>It can improve your symptoms significantly. Of 100 men having surgery about 80 will be very satisfied with the results of the operation.</p> <p>This is the most effective treatment for BPH.</p> <p>TURP is the most common operation available.</p> <p>TUIP is used when the prostate gland is only a little enlarged. There is less risk of retrograde ejaculation with this operation.</p> <p>Laser can offer fewer side effects, less time in hospital (one night) and less time with a catheter (tube up the penis and into the bladder). However it is felt to be only a small improvement and is not always</p>	<p>20 men in 100 will not be very satisfied.</p> <p>This option has the highest risk of complications. Risks vary depending on the type of procedure.</p> <p>Possible (reversible) side effects include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ About 2 in 100 men having TURP will need a blood transfusion. The risk is much lower for laser procedures. ▪ 5 in 100 men will get urinary retention (suddenly not being able to pass urine). ▪ 1 in 100 men having a TURP will get TUR syndrome (low sodium in the blood). ▪ Urine infection: 4 in 100. <p>Some side effects are irreversible:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Retrograde ejaculation (when your orgasms are dry or there is less semen than usual, because the semen is forced back into your bladder). Out of 100 men having TURP 80-90 of them

	<p>available. It is usually reserved for those with very large prostate glands.</p>	<p>will have this side effect.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Urinary incontinence (not being able to control your bladder): between 2 and 7 men in 100 although some may have continence problems before surgery. ▪ Impotence or erection problems: between 5 and 10 in 100. ▪ Needing more surgery: about 5 in 100 after five years, 10 in 100 after 10 years. ▪ Death: this is very rare: about 1 in 1000 men having surgery
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Brief Decision Aids are designed to help you answer three questions: **Do I have options? What are the benefits and risks of these options, (and how likely are they)? How can we make a decision together that is right for me?**