

Enlarged Prostate: Myths and Facts

When men hear the technical term for an enlarged prostate, “benign prostatic hyperplasia (BPH),” they sometimes jump to conclusions about the seriousness of the condition. If you have BPH, learn the facts so you can make an informed decision about what to do next. Consider the following myths and facts about BPH:

Myth: BPH is linked to prostate cancer.

Fact: BPH can be annoying but it is not a life-threatening condition. The “B” in BPH stands for “benign,” which means “not cancer.”

Myth: BPH should always be medically treated.

Fact: If you’ve been diagnosed with BPH but have no bothersome symptoms, you do not need treatment. If you do have bothersome symptoms, such as frequent urination or a weak urine stream, there are several treatment options to choose from.

Myth: There is nothing you can do on your own to relieve BPH symptoms.

Fact: Men can sometimes ease their symptoms simply by avoiding drinks with caffeine, large amounts of liquids, and decongestant medications.

Myth: Having surgery for BPH might have the added benefit of preventing prostate cancer.

Fact: The surgical procedures used for BPH remove or destroy only the inner part of the prostate gland. Cancer usually develops in the outer part, so surgery for BPH does not lower your chance of getting prostate cancer.

A Decision Power Coach Can Help

If you are a Health Net Member and would like to learn more about BPH, call a Health Coach. Health Coaches are specially trained healthcare professionals, such as nurses, dietitians, and respiratory therapists. They are available by phone, anytime, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, at no charge to you. If appropriate, a Health Coach will send you the complimentary video, *Treatment Choices for Benign Prostatic Hyperplasia*.

To talk to a Health Coach, call 1-800-893-5597 (for hearing and speech impaired TTY/TDD 1-800-276-3821) 24 hours a day, 365 days a week. You can also get information online at www.healthnet.com > Decision Power.