

Prostate Cancer in Australia

1. Prostate cancer kills **9 men a day in Australia**. It is the second most common cause of cancer death in men after lung cancer.¹
2. **More men die from prostate cancer than women die from breast cancer.** In 2017, prostate cancer killed 3,275 men and breast cancer killed 2,898 women.¹ However, the Years of Life Lost (YLL) to breast cancer is more than 50% higher than prostate because women with breast cancer die younger on average than men with prostate cancer. In 2011, there were **40,191 Years of Life Lost to prostate cancer and 63,026 Years of Life Lost to breast cancer in women.**²
3. Prostate cancer is the most commonly diagnosed cancer in Australia. In 2014, an average of 50 men a day were diagnosed with prostate cancer (18,291 new cases over the course of the year).³
4. In 2018, it was estimated that the risk of a man being diagnosed with prostate cancer by his 85th birthday was 1 in 7.³
5. The risk of developing prostate cancer increases with age. **Men under 50 are rarely diagnosed with prostate cancer.** Nearly two thirds (63%) of cases are diagnosed in men over 50.⁴
6. **The survival rate for men with prostate cancer is 95%.**³
7. Because of this high survival rate, prostate cancer is the leading cause of non-fatal disease linked to cancer, accounting for nearly one fifth (18%) of the burden.²
8. Each year the Government spends more than \$400m screening around 7 million Australians for cancer. 91% of people screened are women and 9% are men. In total, **an estimated 7% of the \$409m we spent on cancer screening in 2015-2016 was targeted at male cancer.** The Government's position on universal screening for prostate cancer is that the harms outweigh the benefits.⁵
9. Breast cancer research in Australia, currently receives around twice the funding of research into prostate cancer. In 2009-2011, \$85.9m was invested in 317 breast cancer research projects, compared with the \$41.6m which was invested in 195 prostate cancer research projects.⁶
10. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men are less likely to be diagnosed with prostate cancer, but similarly likely to die from prostate cancer, compared with non-Indigenous males.⁷
11. **Gay and Bisexual men are more likely than heterosexual men to experience the impact of prostate cancer** because of the possibility that one or both partners in a same-sex relationship could be diagnosed with it. Research has found that while the biomedical aspects of prostate cancer do not vary depending on sexual orientation, the psychosocial impacts may be different, not least because services tend not to account for the sexual orientation of men with prostate cancer.⁸

References:

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2. Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2016. Australian Burden of Disease Study: Impact and causes of illness and death in Australia 2011. Australian Burden of Disease Study series no. 3. BOD 4. Canberra: AIHW.
3. <https://prostate-cancer.canceraustralia.gov.au/statistics>
4. The risk of developing prostate cancer increases with age. Men under 50 are rarely diagnosed with prostate cancer. Nearly two thirds (63%) of cases are diagnosed in men over five.
5. https://assets.nationbuilder.com/amhf/pages/29/attachments/original/1550207201/Factsheet4_CancerScreening.pdf?1550207201
6. https://canceraustralia.gov.au/system/tdf/publications/cancer-research-australia-overview-funding-cancer-research-projects-and-research-programs-australia/pdf/ca_audit_report_final.pdf?file=1&type=node&id=4008
7. Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2013. Prostate cancer in Australia. Cancer series no. 79. Cat. no. CAN 76. Canberra: AIHW.
8. Wong, W.K.T., Lowe, A., Dowsett, G.W., Duncan, D., O'Keeffe, D., & Mitchell, A. (2013). Prostate cancer information needs of Australian gay and bisexual men. Sydney: Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia.