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IS PROSTATE CANCER SCREENING RIGHT FOR YOU?



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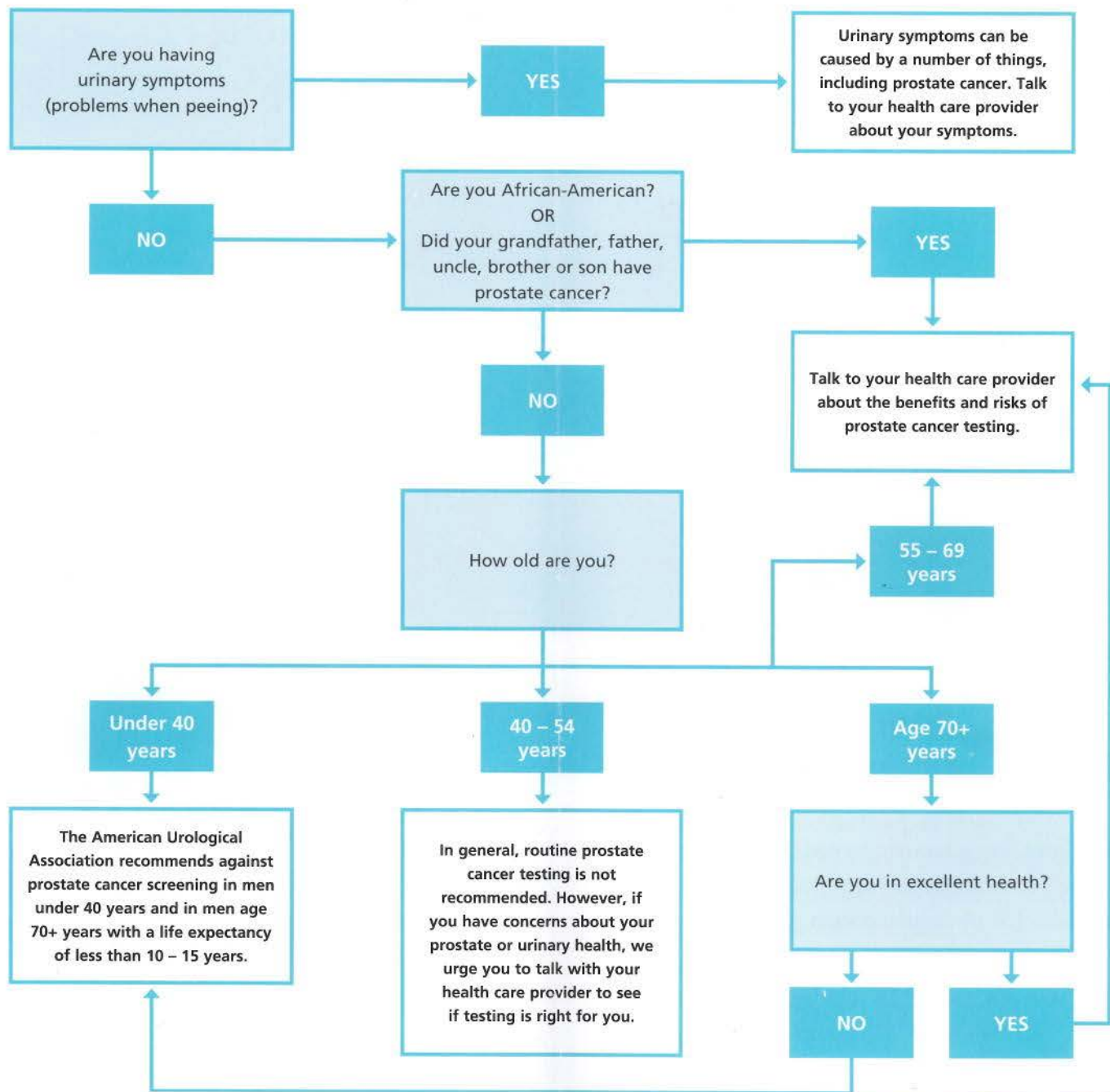
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Is Prostate Cancer Screening Right for You?



WHAT MEN SHOULD KNOW ABOUT PROSTATE CANCER

Prostate cancer is the second most common cancer in men, and the second leading cause of cancer death in men. One in six men will be diagnosed in his lifetime. African-American men and men with a family history of prostate cancer have a higher chance of getting the disease.

Because it often grows very slowly and may not cause health problems, prostate cancer is different from many cancers. In 2012, more than 240,000 men were diagnosed with the disease, but only about 28,000 died. Many men with prostate cancer will never know they have it unless they get tested.

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ABOUT PROSTATE CANCER TESTING

To diagnose prostate cancer, health care providers use a blood test to measure your levels of prostate-specific antigen (PSA). A prostate biopsy (tissue sample) is the only way to know for sure if you have prostate cancer. Your health care provider may recommend a biopsy if you have a high PSA level.

It is important to know that the PSA test is also used to test for other conditions. If you are having urinary symptoms (problems when peeing) your health care provider may perform a PSA test to evaluate your prostate health. Remember, urinary symptoms can be caused by a number of things, not just prostate cancer.

WHO IS AT HIGH RISK FOR PROSTATE CANCER?

If you are African-American, or if you have a first-degree relative (father, brother, or son) who has been diagnosed with prostate cancer, you have a higher risk of developing the disease; especially if the disease occurred at an early age (younger than age 55) or in multiple generations of your family. You should talk with your health care provider about the benefits and risks of prostate cancer testing.

POSSIBLE RISKS OF HAVING A PSA TEST

- A normal PSA test may miss some prostate cancers (a “false negative” result).
- Sometimes, PSA test results suggest something is wrong when it isn’t (a “false positive” result). This can cause unneeded worry and stress.
- A “false positive” PSA test may lead to an unneeded prostate biopsy (tissue sample).
- A high PSA test may find a prostate cancer that is slow-growing and never would have caused you problems.
- Treatment of prostate cancer can have side effects. Problems with getting erections, leaking urine or bowel function can occur.
- According to the AUA, in asymptomatic men, the greatest benefit of routine screening can be found in men ages 55 to 69 years. Men younger than 55 or older than 69 who are worried about their personal risk factors should talk with their health care provider to determine whether prostate cancer screening is appropriate.

IS SCREENING RIGHT FOR YOU?

The American Urological Association (AUA) has recently modified its recommendations about prostate cancer testing. The chart on the right is based on these new guidelines and is designed to help you decide whether prostate cancer testing is right for you.

BENEFITS OF HAVING A PSA TEST

- A normal PSA test may put your mind at ease.
- A PSA test may find prostate cancer early, before it has spread.
- Early treatment of prostate cancer may help some men to avoid problems from cancer.
- Early treatment of prostate cancer may help some men live longer.