

Dear Patient,

I hope this letter finds you in good health.

As part of our ongoing commitment to the wellbeing of our patients, I would like to take a moment to discuss the importance of detecting prostate cancer early and how the PSA (Prostate-Specific Antigen) test can help in this process.

Prostate cancer is one of the most common cancers among men and individuals with a prostate gland. Early detection can significantly improve treatment outcomes, and you may have noticed the promotion of prostate cancer awareness in the media lately. Indeed, you may already be considering a PSA test.

The PSA test measures the level of a protein produced by the prostate gland, which can be higher in men with prostate cancer. It is a valuable tool in identifying potential concerns before symptoms develop, enabling earlier intervention if necessary.

However, before deciding whether to have a PSA test, it is essential to consider a few points. The test is not perfect and can produce false-positive or false-negative results. A high PSA level does not always mean cancer is present, and not all prostate cancers require treatment. Some men with prostate cancer may never experience symptoms or require intervention.

I would always encourage anyone with prostate symptoms (***frequent urination, needing to urinate during the night, urgency to pass urine, straining to pass urine, weak urine flow, feeling your bladder is not emptying fully, blood in your urine or semen***), to arrange to speak with me or one of my medical colleagues about it.

If on the other hand, you are asymptomatic (have none of the prostate symptoms) and are over the age of 50 years, you may still wish to have the test. If this is the case, then I would recommend you read the national guidance on PSA testing in asymptomatic men first, which is available via the link below:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prostate-specific-antigen-testing-description-in-brief/psa-testing-and-prostate-cancer-advice-for-men-without-symptoms-of-prostate-disease-aged-50-and-over>

If you would prefer, we can also send the information out to you via text message. It is important you read the information, so that you are fully aware of the potential benefits and limitations of the PSA test, and so that you can make an informed decision on whether to have the test, based on your individual health circumstances, family history, and personal preferences. You are obviously more than welcome to discuss the information further with myself or another GP, or simply request the blood test if you wish to proceed. You will be asked to confirm that you have read the information at the appointment.

Many thanks for reading.

Best wishes,

Dr Stephen Marmion