

Information for Patients

Benign prostatic hyperplasia (BPH) is a condition where, as people with a prostate grow older, the prostate gland becomes larger. It can cause urinary symptoms (affecting your pee). Some changes in lifestyle and some medicines may help relieve the symptoms. If these are not effective then in a small number of cases, surgery (an operation) may be appropriate.

About the condition

BPH is a very common condition. It is not cancer. The increasing size of the prostate gland means that it is more difficult for urine to pass out from the bladder. This can lead to symptoms such as urgently needing to pass urine, difficulty starting urine flow, slow flow, and not completely emptying the bladder. In rare cases, there can be serious symptoms such as your kidneys not working well.

What are the **BENEFITS** of the surgery?

If you have found that lifestyle changes and medicines have not worked, then in some cases an operation on the prostate gland may help to improve symptoms. If the kidneys are not working well then an operation may be helpful.

What are the **RISKS**?

There are many sorts of operations that can be carried out. There are risks for all operations, including bleeding, infection, pain, and how an anaesthetic may affect you. There may also be a risk of developing sexual problems such as erectile dysfunction (unable to keep an erection).

What are the **ALTERNATIVES**?

Lifestyle changes such as avoiding caffeinated drinks, avoiding lots of fluid before bedtime and bladder training exercises are often helpful. There are also medicines to relax and shrink the prostate gland. These changes and medicines should be tried before thinking about an operation. You can speak to a doctor or other clinician to help you decide what will work best for you.

What if you do **NOTHING**?

Without any lifestyle changes or treatments, symptoms of BPH may worsen over time.

For more information see [Benign prostate enlargement - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](http://www.nhs.uk)

You can find out more about the [Evidence Based Interventions](#) programme online