

ACTIVE SURVEILLANCE

“Watchful Waiting”

**Know
Your
Stats**

About Prostate Cancer®

WHAT IS ACTIVE SURVEILLANCE? Not all prostate cancers require active treatment, and not all prostate cancers are life-threatening. If you are diagnosed with a very early stage of prostate cancer, your doctor may recommend undergoing “active surveillance,” also called “watchful waiting.” Active surveillance is a type of close follow-up for men with prostate cancer. This follow-up usually involves regular prostate-specific antigen (PSA) tests, digital rectal examinations (DREs) and possible prostate biopsies. If these periodic tests show that your cancer is progressing, you and your doctor may begin to discuss other forms of treatment.

The goal of active surveillance is to allow men to maintain their quality of life when the prostate cancer is slow growing or inactive, while allowing them to elect active treatment when the disease becomes more aggressive or begins to grow.

Active surveillance may be a suitable option for men who are not experiencing symptoms, or when the cancer is not expected to grow at an aggressive rate. Active surveillance can also be considered for men who are older or have other serious health conditions, which can make the cancer more difficult to treat immediately.

The risk of active surveillance is that the cancer could grow and spread to other parts of the body between follow-ups, making it more difficult to treat.

Not all prostate cancers require active treatment, and not all prostate cancers are life-threatening. The decision to proceed to active treatment is one that men should discuss in detail with their urologists to determine whether active treatment is necessary, or whether surveillance may be an option.

Choosing the right treatment for prostate cancer is an individual decision that patients should make together with their doctor. No one treatment is perfect for every man.

Talk to your doctor about which treatment is right for you.