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NEWS WEEK
OF THE WEEK

Enlargement of Prostate When should you be worried?



Prostate is a pear shaped organ of the size of walnut situated just below the urinary bladder in men. The urinary passage (urethra) passes through this gland. As the age advances this organ grows in size and constricts the urinary passage. Almost 60% of men at the age of 60 yrs and all men at the age of 90 yrs would have some degree of prostatic enlargement. However, only about two thirds of these would have any symptoms pertaining to enlarged prostate. These symptoms comprise of increased frequency of urination, hesitancy in passing urine, interrupted and weak stream, sense of incomplete evacuation of urinary bladder, urgency to

pass urine and occasionally loss of control over urination. In extreme cases there is complete inability to pass urine and this requires evacuation of urine by passing a rubber tube into the bladder and connecting it with an external bag.

Enlargement of prostate could be benign or malignant. More often than not, it is not possible to differentiate between the two types of enlargement on the basis of symptoms alone. Usually, the onset of symptoms is so gradual that the person does not even realise that he is suffering from a disability until some kind of crisis is precipitated. An expert Urologist should be able to differentiate between benign and malignant enlargement of prostate on the basis of clinical examination along with simple investigations like Ultrasonography and blood levels of PSA. Uroflowmetry helps to assess the flow of urine and is required for proper planning and follow up of treatment.

If Benign Enlargement of

Prostate (BPH) is diagnosed at an early stage, medical treatment is quite effective for relieving the symptoms and retarding its further growth. However if diagnosed at a later stage, surgical treatment of enlarged Prostate is generally required. Now a days, surgical removal of prostate gland is done using fine telescope passed through the natural urinary passage. Therefore there are no cuts or stitches for this kind of operation. The prostate gland is chipped off using electric energy and removed piecemeal. This procedure is called Transurethral Resection of Prostate (TURP). TURP has been the gold standard for surgical treatment of Prostate. If neglected, the obstruction due to prostate gland can cause back pressure changes in Kidneys, leading to Kidney failure.

Laser energy has been recently introduced for surgical treatment of Prostate. However, it is still in the phase of evolution and its long term efficacy as

compared to the gold standard (TURP) needs to be established. Cancer of Prostate gland is usually a slow growing tumor and it can be detected at an early stage by an alert Urologist. Regular health check ups with special focus on prostate must be carried out for the same.

Since most of these patients are elderly, they usually do have associated medical problems like diabetes, high blood pressure, heart diseases etc. Therefore surgical intervention must be carried out at a place where there are comprehensive medical facilities including medical and surgical intensive care unit. PSRI is one such place where specialized tertiary care is available for such patients.

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