

Are men with a family history of prostate cancer eligible for active surveillance?

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Micrograph showing prostatic acinar adenocarcinoma (the most common form of prostate cancer) Credit: Wikipedia, [CC BY-SA 3.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/)

Active surveillance—careful monitoring to determine if or when a cancer warrants treatment—is an increasingly prevalent choice for prostate cancer, but it's unclear if the strategy is appropriate for men with a family history of prostate cancer. A recent analysis of the medical literature concluded that a family history of prostate cancer does not appear to increase a patient's risk of having more aggressive prostate

cancer.

In the analysis, six studies found that [family history](#) does not appear to increase the risk of [prostate cancer](#) progression, while one study found that family history may increase the risk of [prostate cancer progression](#) only in African Americans.

"Our results suggest that having a family history of prostate cancer should not automatically exclude men from being considered for active surveillance treatments, although some questions remain about risks for African American men with a family history of prostate cancer," said Dr. Jim Dupree, senior author of the *BJU International* review. "Men obviously need to have thorough conversations with their doctors about risks, benefits, and options, and more research needs to be done to confirm these findings, especially among African American men."

More information: J.M Telang et al, Prostate cancer, family history, and eligibility for active surveillance: A systematic review of the literature, *BJU International* (2017). [DOI: 10.1111/bju.13862](https://doi.org/10.1111/bju.13862)

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