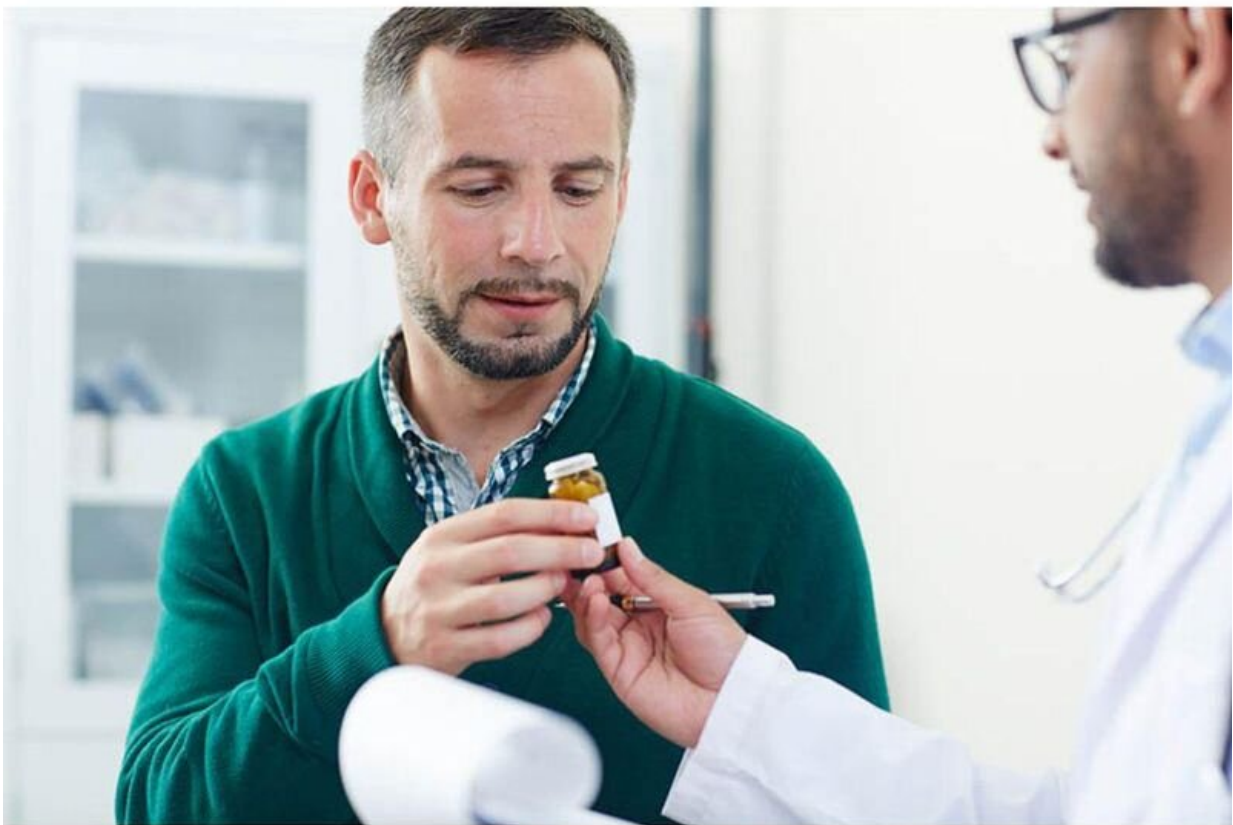


Prostatitis: What it is, symptoms, causes and treatment

May 31 2023, by Ann Schreiber



When most men think about their prostate, it's to worry about whether

they have prostate cancer or not. But another condition is far more common and plenty painful.

Prostatitis involves inflammation of the prostate gland and sometimes the areas around it. Not only is prostatitis highly treatable, but it is highly prevalent among men. According to the Prostate Cancer Foundation, it is the [leading cause of urinary tract infections in men, resulting in approximately 2 million doctor's visits each year in the United States](#). In fact, it's estimated that half of all men will experience prostatitis at some point.

The U.S. National Center for Health Statistics further reveals that about 25% of men who seek [medical attention](#) for urological problems exhibit symptoms of prostatitis. Here, experts give the rundown on prostatitis, including its various types, causes, common symptoms and available treatments.

What is prostatitis?

Prostatitis, a condition characterized by the inflammation of the prostate gland, is known for its frequent and often debilitating pain. According to the [Cleveland Clinic](#), it is a complex condition that can lead to various symptoms, including infection, inflammation and pain.

Two types of prostatitis are associated with [urinary tract infections](#) (UTIs), while the remaining types may not have an infectious origin. Regardless of the type, prostatitis is commonly recognized for the intense pain its sufferers feel, which can significantly impact a man's quality of life.

Types of prostatitis

According to the U.S. National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases, there are [four distinct types of prostatitis](#), each with its own characteristics:

- Chronic prostatitis or chronic pelvic pain syndrome: This prostatitis is characterized by [symptoms that start gradually and linger over a couple of weeks](#). It may also involve urinary symptoms such as frequent urination, urgency and difficulty emptying the bladder.
- Acute bacterial prostatitis: Acute bacterial prostatitis is caused by a [bacterial infection](#) in the prostate gland. It starts suddenly with severe pain in the pelvic region, fever, chills and difficulty urinating. StatPearls indicates that [acute bacterial prostatitis is rare; when it occurs, it is often associated with bladder obstruction or an immunocompromised state](#).
- Chronic bacterial prostatitis: Unlike the acute form, chronic bacterial prostatitis is a persistent infection that may recur over an extended period. It shares symptoms with acute bacterial prostatitis, but is characterized by milder pain and discomfort. Harvard Health states that [chronic bacterial infection accounts for a small percentage of cases of chronic prostatitis](#).
- Asymptomatic inflammatory prostatitis: As the name suggests, men with this prostatitis [do not experience any symptoms](#). It is often diagnosed incidentally during tests for other urinary or reproductive tract disorders. Fortunately, asymptomatic inflammatory prostatitis does not lead to complications and typically does not require treatment.

Prostatitis causes

According to the [U.S. National Institutes of Health](#), the causes of prostatitis vary depending on the specific type of the condition:

- Chronic prostatitis or chronic pelvic pain syndrome: The exact cause of chronic prostatitis/chronic pelvic pain syndrome remains unknown. It is widely believed that a microorganism, not a bacterial infection, may be responsible for triggering the condition.
- Acute and chronic bacterial prostatitis: Bacterial prostatitis is caused by an infection in the prostate gland. The infection is believed to occur when bacteria travel from the urethra (the tube through which urine passes) into the prostate, leading to inflammation and associated symptoms.

It's important to know that [acute bacterial prostatitis can be caused by various types of bacteria commonly associated with urinary tract infections](#). Additionally, prostatitis can also result from infections transmitted through sexual contact.

However, "you don't need to avoid sex if you have prostatitis. Typically, sex won't worsen prostatitis. But some men who have prostatitis have pain with ejaculation," [Dr. Patricio Gargollo](#), a urologist with the Mayo Clinic, said in a recent [article](#).

Prostatitis symptoms

Prostatitis has many symptoms that can significantly impact a man's daily life and well-being, especially when left untreated. Here are some [common symptoms associated with prostatitis](#), according to Johns Hopkins Medicine:

- Frequent urination
- Dysuria (a burning or stinging sensation during urination, making it uncomfortable or painful)
- Reduced urine flow
- Rectal pain or pressure

- Fever and chills
- Lower back or pelvic pain
- Urethral discharge during bowel movements
- Erectile dysfunction or decreased sex drive
- Uncomfortable sensations in the rectal or genital area

Also, the symptoms of prostatitis can mimic those of other medical conditions or issues. Therefore, seeking medical advice from a [health care provider](#) for an accurate diagnosis is important.

Prostatitis treatment

The treatment for prostatitis is determined by age, overall health, medical history, the severity of the condition, individual tolerance for specific treatments, expected duration and patient preference. The specific type of prostatitis also plays a significant role in determining the appropriate treatment. Here are some general treatment options for prostatitis, followed by specific treatments based on the different types of prostatitis.

Treatment for prostatitis typically involves a combination of approaches to relieve symptoms, eliminate infection (if present), reduce inflammation and improve overall prostate health. These may include:

- Medications
- Alpha blockers
- Pain relievers
- Physical therapy

But more specifically, the type of treatment recommended is typically based on the different types of prostatitis. Johns Hopkins Medicine indicates [typical treatments for prostatitis as follows](#):

- Acute bacterial prostatitis: Hospitalization may require administering intravenous antibiotics and providing supportive care. Oral antibiotics are typically prescribed for a few weeks after hospitalization, to wipe out the infection.
- Chronic bacterial prostatitis: Similar to acute bacterial prostatitis, long-term antibiotic therapy is necessary. This can range from several weeks to months to effectively treat persistent [infection](#).
- Chronic prostatitis/[chronic pelvic pain syndrome](#): Treatment focuses on managing symptoms. It may include medications for [pain](#) relief, alpha blockers to relax the muscles, physical therapy and lifestyle modifications to ease symptoms.
- Asymptomatic inflammatory prostatitis: Asymptomatic inflammatory prostatitis generally does not require [treatment](#) unless there are specific complications or underlying conditions.

Copyright © 2023 [HealthDay](#). All rights reserved.

Citation: Prostatitis: What it is, symptoms, causes and treatment (2023, May 31) retrieved 24 June 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2023-05-prostatitis-symptoms-treatment.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.