FACTBASEDUROLOGY

How is BPH evaluated?

A clear path from symptoms to the right tests

PROSTATE SERIES · FBU-P04



Illustrative clinic scene

Start with the person, not the scan

An illustrative visit — not a real patient record

“My stream is weaker, and I get up three times at night.”



What would you ask before calling this BPH?

The visit answers three questions

01

What is happening?

History + symptom pattern

02

How much does it bother you?

Symptom score + quality of life

03

Is another cause present?

Urine test + focused exam

History: follow the symptom pattern

EMPTYING

- Weak or interrupted stream
- Hesitancy and straining
- Feeling incompletely empty

STORAGE

- Urgency and frequency
- Waking to pass urine
- Leaks or discomfort

A score gives symptoms a baseline

International Prostate Symptom Score (IPSS): seven items, total 0–35

The seven questions cover:

- Incomplete emptying
- Frequency
- Intermittency
- Urgency
- Weak stream
- Straining
- Nocturia

How the total is described

0–7	Mild
8–19	Moderate
20–35	Severe

The separate quality-of-life question captures how troublesome the symptoms feel.

Context can change the interpretation

MEDICINES	Cold remedies, diuretics, prescriptions
FLUIDS	Timing, caffeine, alcohol
HEALTH HISTORY	Diabetes, infections, surgery
IMPACT	Sleep, work, daily activity

The urine sample looks beyond BPH



Illustrative clinical scene

Blood

Needs its own assessment

Infection clues

May change the diagnosis

Other findings

Can point beyond the prostate

The exam adds physical clues

Lower abdomen

Is the bladder distended or tender?

Prostate examination

A digital rectal exam may add information when appropriate.

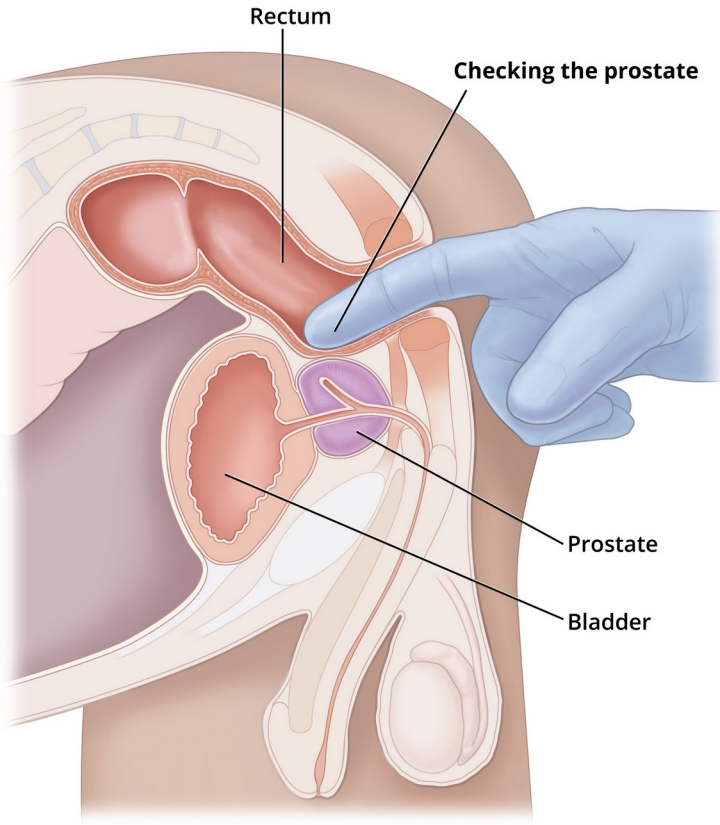
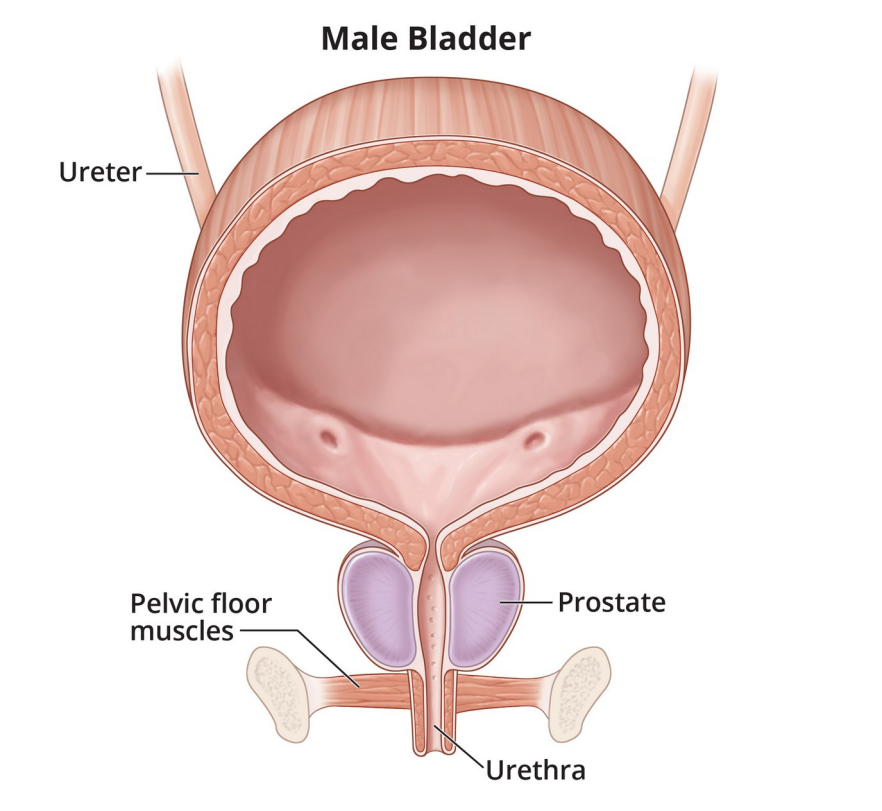


Illustration: NIDDK / NIH

Why the prostate is considered

Anatomy helps explain one possible route to a weak stream



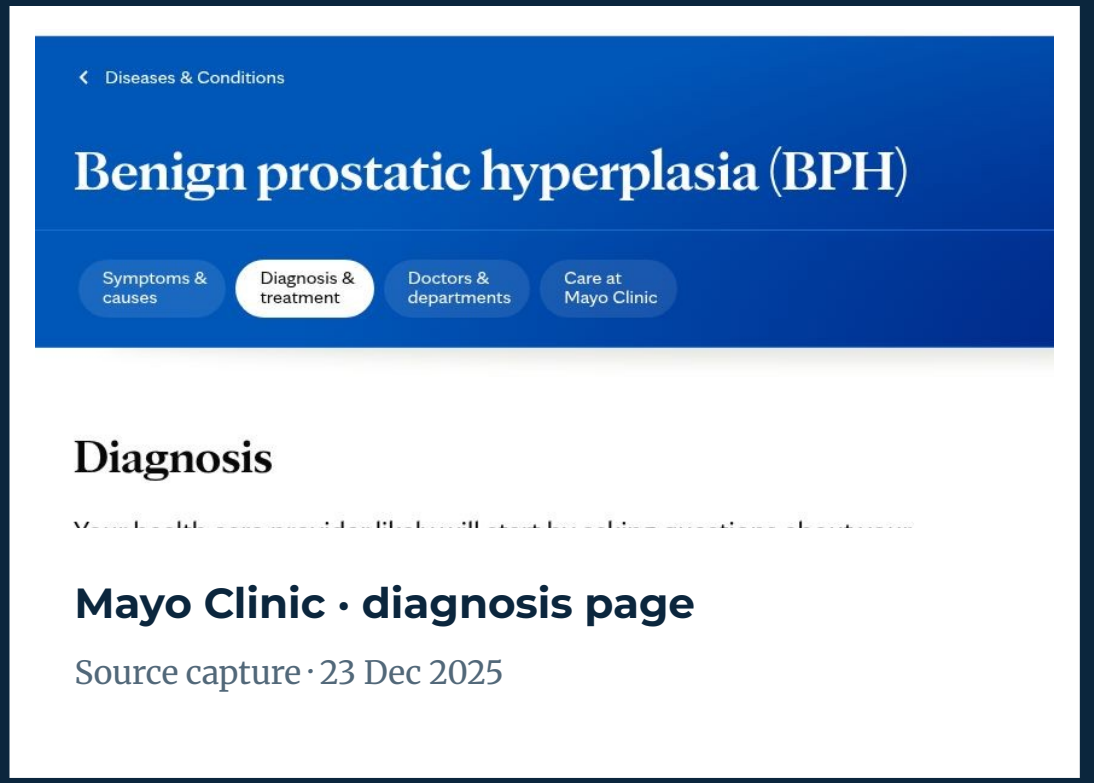
The prostate sits below the bladder and surrounds the urethra near the bladder outlet.

Anatomy raises a question; testing and history answer it.

Do we need more information?

History + score + urine + examination

A targeted test should answer the next clinical question.



Mayo Clinic · diagnosis page

Source capture · 23 Dec 2025

What remains after you void?

POSTVOID RESIDUAL (PVR)

A bladder scan estimates urine left after urination.



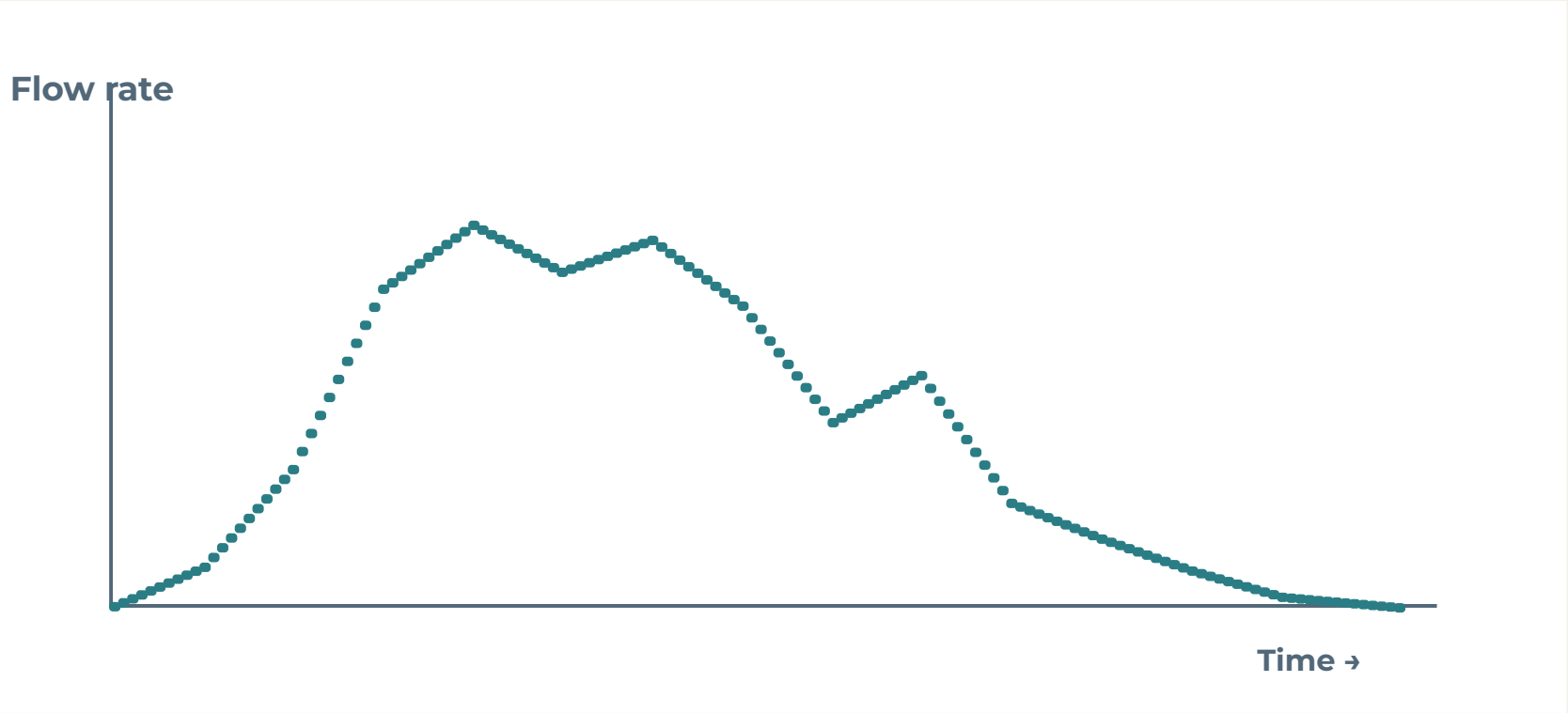
Cleveland Clinic · medically reviewed



Illustrative scan scene

How fast does urine flow?

Uroflowmetry records flow rate over time



Schematic example · no patient data

A shape to interpret, not a diagnosis by itself.

Where does PSA fit?

PSA is a blood test considered in context.

Why consider it?

It may inform prostate assessment and a treatment discussion.

What it cannot do

A PSA value alone does not diagnose the cause of urinary symptoms.

Further tests answer specific questions

Bladder diary	When and how often?
Prostate imaging	What is the size or shape for planning?
Cystoscopy	Is there a reason to inspect the channel?
Pressure–flow study	Is uncertainty about obstruction important?

Some symptoms need prompt attention

- Unable to urinate
- Blood in the urine
- Painful, frequent urgency with fever or chills
- Severe lower abdominal or urinary pain

Pause and decide

Which test measures urine left in the bladder after urination?

A · PSA blood test

B · Uroflowmetry

C · Postvoid residual measurement

The evaluation is a sequence

01	**Listen**	What happens, and how much does it matter?
02	**Check**	Score, urine sample, examination.
03	**Target**	Measure flow or residual urine if useful.
04	**Decide**	Interpret together and plan next steps.

Sources & image notes

S02 · AUA

BPH guideline (2026)

https://www.auanet.org/guidelines-and-quality/guidelines/bph-guideline

S03 · NIDDK

Enlarged Prostate (BPH)

https://www.niddk.nih.gov/health-information/urologic-diseases/prostate-problems/enlarged-prostate-benign-prostatic-hyperplasia

S03 · NIDDK

Urinary retention diagnosis

https://www.niddk.nih.gov/health-information/urologic-diseases/urinary-retention/diagnosis

S03 · NIDDK

Urodynamic testing

https://www.niddk.nih.gov/health-information/diagnostic-tests/urodynamic-testing

S04 · BAUS

IPSS patient form

https://www.baus.org.uk/_userfiles/pages/files/Patients/Leaflets/IPSS.pdf

NIDDK anatomy image credited to NIDDK. Clinic and bladder-scan scenes are illustrative generated images. Flow trace and case are original examples, not patient data.

Clinic sources & visual credits

S05 · Mayo Clinic	**BPH: Diagnosis and treatment** https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/benign-prostatic-hyperplasia/diagnosis-treatment/drc-20370093
S06 · Cleveland Clinic	**Post-Void Residual Urine Test** https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/diagnostics/16423-postvoid-residual
S07 · NIDDK / NIH	**Digital rectal exam with labels** https://www.niddk.nih.gov/news/media-library/11221

Source page captures: Mayo Clinic and Cleveland Clinic. NIDDK diagram credited to the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases, NIH.