

## Understanding Your PSA Level

Prostate-specific antigen (PSA) is a protein produced by the prostate gland. Small amounts are normally released into your bloodstream. Testing the amount of PSA circulating in your blood can help your doctor identify many prostate-related problems.

Adult men typically have PSA levels below 4 nanograms per milliliter (ng/mL). When interpreting a PSA value, your doctor considers several factors that may affect your PSA level and help determine a normal range for you. Such factors include your age and the size of your prostate.

PSA levels rise naturally with age, but if a higher-than-normal number is found it increases the likelihood of prostate cancer. A PSA level between 4 and 10 is "borderline high" and suggests a 25 percent cancer risk. A PSA above 10 is "high" and suggests a risk above 67 percent. Keep in mind, though, that high PSA values also can occur with benign (non-cancerous) conditions such as a past infection of the prostate gland, interrupted blood flow to the gland, or benign enlargement of the prostate (BPH), which is common in men as they age.

The age-adjusted scale below often is used to determine if your PSA level is within normal range. Talk to your doctor about what your results mean for you.

Age	Normal PSA range
40 and younger	0 to 2.0
45	0 to 2.4
50	0 to 2.8
55	0 to 3.3
60	0 to 3.8
65	0 to 4.5
70	0 to 5.3
75	0 to 6.2
80 and older	0 to 7.2

Your doctor also may measure your "PSA velocity," the change in PSA level from year to year. If PSA rises faster than 0.75 in a year, it can suggest the presence of cancer.

Your doctor also may measure your "percent-free PSA." One form of PSA attaches to blood proteins and another circulates freely in the blood. Men with prostate cancer have lesser amounts of free PSA than men without prostate cancer.

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