

# Benign Prostatic Hyperplasia - the curse of the middle-aged man

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## **Business Secretary Lord Mandelson last night underwent surgery for BPH, which affects at least two-fifths of men over 50**

Thousands of men each year are diagnosed with Benign Prostatic Hyperplasia (BPH), with many too embarrassed to seek help.

When men do see the doctor, it's usually because symptoms such as having to get up frequently in the night to go to the toilet have become intolerable.

It's a condition that enlarges the prostate - a walnut-sized gland present only in men, situated under the bladder.

Benign means it's not dangerous, or cancerous, while hyperplasia means an increase in cells that leads to enlargement.

As the prostate gets larger, it presses on the urethra, literally putting the squeeze on the bladder. It results in difficulty in starting a flow of urine, and incomplete and frequent urination.

At least two fifths of men over 50 suffer from symptoms caused by BPH, which can have a major impact on quality of life.

If left untreated, it can lead to acute urinary retention - the complete inability to urinate, which can cause kidney damage and needs urgent hospital treatment.

The exact cause of BPH is not certain. It's part of the ageing process and may be due to a changing balance of hormones in older men that encourages cell growth.

Treatment with drugs is the first port of call, which can reduce the obstruction or make the prostate shrink.

However, some patients need surgery, which usually involves a procedure called TURP ( transurethral resection of the prostate), in which tissue is shaved away using an instrument passed through the urethra.

Other forms of treatment include the insertion of a stent - a tiny metal coil - to open up the urethra inside the prostate, or laser beams to destroy prostate tissue. A botox injection into the prostate may also be effective.

Read more: <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/health/article-1208240/Benign-Prostatic-Hyperplasia--curse-middle-aged-man.html#ixzz0QuaP5RI5>

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