



ABOUT THE PROSTATE

We celebrate Father's Day in the month of June, and it is also Men's Health Month. Last year I wrote about some general issues dealing with men's health, and that article can be found on the Bow Times web site. I'd encourage you to look it up and read it. This month I thought I would focus on a unique part of male anatomy, the prostate gland. As part of the male reproductive system it is found in all male mammals. It is about the size of a walnut, and it surrounds the urethra at the base of the urinary bladder. Because of this location it bears the name prostate, which comes from the Greek 'prostates' meaning "one who stands before" or "protector."

70% of the prostate is made up of glands and 30% is smooth muscle. The main function of the prostate gland is to supply about one third of the seminal fluid (semen). The other two thirds of seminal fluid comes from the seminal vesicles. Semen is the fluid medium in which sperm (made in the testicles) are transported out of the male by means of an ejaculation. The volume of ejaculate varies from ¼ to 1 teaspoon. The contribution from the prostate is important because it contains prostate-specific antigen (PSA), which helps to thin out the semen allowing sperm to move more freely. It also contains zinc and citric acid.

As sexual excitement increases, the muscle fibers squeeze out the prostatic fluid from the glands into the urethra where it combines with the fluid from the seminal vesicles and the sperm from the testicles.

This amazing gland can give men some problems. Although bacteria can cause prostatitis (inflammation of the prostate), frequently no causative agent is found. Prostatitis usually occurs in men under the age of 50. Symptoms usually include pain and discomfort between the scrotum and anus, or in the low back. Half of all men have symptoms of prostatitis at some point in their lives.

As men age, the prostate enlarges. This is called benign prostatic hyperplasia (BPH) and usually occurs in men over the age of 50. The enlarging prostate compresses the urethra making it difficult to urinate and decreases the force of the stream. Having to urinate frequently and at night are other common symptoms of BPH. By age 60, over 50% of men have BPH and by age 85 that increases to 90%.

The third common medical condition is prostate cancer. Early cancer may not cause any symptoms at all, but as the disease progresses symptoms of BPH occur. In addition there may be blood in the urine or semen. Ejaculation and urination might be painful. 80-85% of prostate cancers are detected in an early stage and carry an excellent 5-year prognosis. In general, the overall prognosis for prostate cancer is among the best of all cancers. If, however, the cancer has spread, the 5-year survival is about 28%. According to the CDC about 13 American men out of 100 will get prostate cancer during their lifetime, and 2 to 3 of those 13 will die from the disease. Remember that it is older men who get prostate cancer, and they can die of other causes before the prostate cancer becomes life threatening. Even though prostate cancer is (after skin cancer) the most common cancer in men, lung cancer and colon/rectal cancers claim many more lives. The risk goes up if you have a family history of prostate cancer or if you are African-American. The two common "screening" tests for prostate cancer are the PSA test and the digital rectal exam. Both of these screening tests are under scrutiny, and many believe that there is not enough evidence that they are beneficial. Therefore, you should have a conversation with your physician to determine your risk/benefit ratio for these screening tests. The PCA3 (found in urine) and the Prostate Health Index (a mathematical formula combining three test results into a single score) are newer screening options. The definitive diagnosis comes with a needle biopsy of the prostate, and with MRI imaging and real time ultrasound this biopsy is more accurate than it used to be.

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Building another avenue to help Northern New Englanders plan for their financial future, Bangor Savings Bank has established Bangor Wealth Management of New Hampshire LLC and opened its first office. Following new Bangor Savings Bank branch openings in Concord and Manchester, Bangor Wealth Management is another demonstration of the commitment Maine's largest bank has to the Granite State.

Bangor Wealth Management of New Hampshire's new location just opened at 82 North Main Street in Concord.

Bangor Wealth Management of New Hampshire will guide individual investors in a comprehensive understanding of their financial goals and objectives, and help to develop strategies and individualized solutions for:

- Retirement Planning
- Trust and Estate Planning
- Investment Management

Additionally, Bangor Wealth Management of New Hampshire will help organizations of all sizes with Institutional Investments.

Bangor Wealth Management is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Bangor Savings Bank, and the new wealth management office in New Hampshire's capital city will be operated by the following team:

- **Mark A. Paluzzi**, CFP, CTFA, AEP; Senior Vice President & New Hampshire Market Leader
 - 30 years experience in financial services
- **Mike LeBel**, CAIA, CFA; Vice President & Portfolio Manager
 - 24 years investment management experience
- **Natalya Pearl**, CFP; Vice President & Senior Relationship Manager
 - 13 years financial services experience working with individuals and families

The \$6 billion Bank, founded in 1852, is in its 169th year with more than 60 branches in Maine and New Hampshire and business and/or loan production offices in Maine, New Hampshire, and Massachusetts. Bangor Savings Bank and The Bangor Savings Bank Foundation have invested more than \$3.4 million into the community in the form of sponsorships, grants, and partnership initiatives last year.

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DR. JOHN A. SELLAR, BS, DC
Chiropractor

35 West Street Concord, NH 03301
concordnhchiropractor.com
sellarchiropractic@yahoo.com

PROADJUSTER 
and
Impulse Instrument

603-224-3883 Fax 603-224-6782

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