



YOUR PROSTATE SURVEY – Jim Pollard

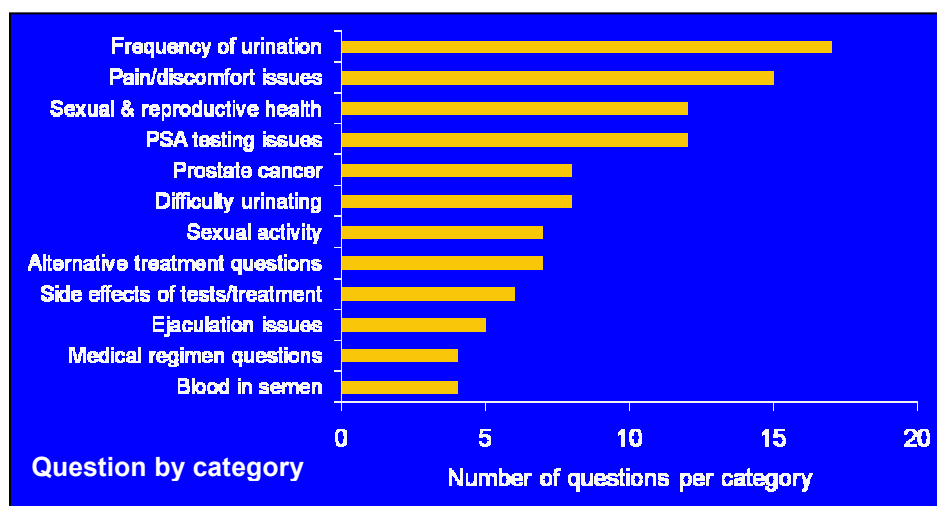
Men and their prostates: the big question

- *I have experienced an irritation in my prostate after ejaculation for many years.*
- *I had surgery on my prostate 4 weeks ago. Ever since I have had extreme pain when I start stop urinating.*
- *My doctor checks my prostate only through blood tests which come out ok. Should he be physically checking my prostate?*
- *I am going to the toilet 2 or 3 times a night and quite often during the day.*
- *Is it true that reducing/cutting out caffeine will reduce pain caused by prostatitis?*

These are just some of the examples of the questions we've been asked at yourprostate.eu. Some are general; some are very specific. Some we could have anticipated but many others we could not.

Run by the European Men's Health Forum, yourprostate.eu is a pioneering new website enabling men across Europe and the world to ask questions anonymously online about their prostates and have them answered promptly and in the detail they need by a highly qualified health professional.

An analysis of the first 100 questions posed shows the two most common subjects to have been frequent urination and pain. These we might have expected but there have been many, many other topics too: difficulty urinating, ejaculation, blood in semen, PSA, cancer, mainstream treatments, alternative treatments, side-effects, sex and sexual and reproductive health.

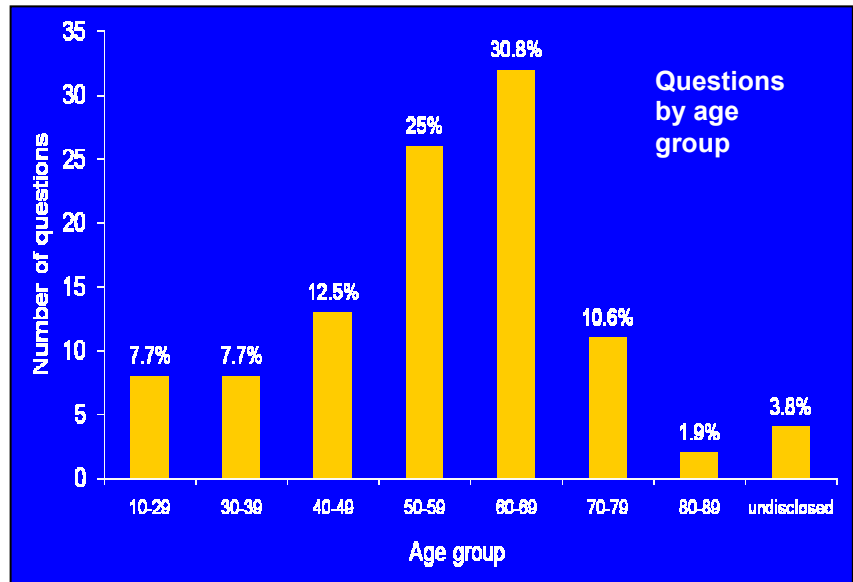


Doctors, despite their experience, simply cannot anticipate the vast range of needs out there when men are given free range with their questions. Indeed, the initial analysis suggest, as other research has previously, that patients and doctors often have very different ideas of what the issues are.

Tracey Nickerson of the Prostate Centre in London, one of the urology nurses who has been answering the questions online says: *'For men, asking personal questions about their health*

is never an easy task. Having an easy to access online health service with no-appointment needed, where men of all ages can ask in-depth questions anonymously is priceless. It gives men the chance to speak far more frankly about their condition and treatment options resulting in men receiving a better service and treatment delivery and in we, the health professionals, getting a better understanding of what men actually want from us.'

Questions have been posed by males of all ages from pre-teens to over 80s with the majority (c30%) in the 60-69 age-group. Questions change as men get older with younger males tending to focus more on the penis (all but one question from the under 30s fell into this category) with urination and actual prostate-related problems becoming a greater concern with age. Older men are also more likely to be having prostate-related treatment and to ask questions about that.



Questioners have come from all over the world, the majority from the UK and, this site being in English only, other English-speaking countries.

The site will remain open until December.

EMHF director Erick Savoye said: *'this has been an enormously useful initiative from which we've learned a lot about men's needs. All men with a question about their prostate and if you include all those who don't know what it is, that means most of us, are urged to log on to yourprostate.eu today. It really couldn't be easier. With no complicated registration, your question will be on its way to an expert within five or ten minutes.'*

As well as helping the specific questioners, the material generated and data collected by this service will be used by the EMHF to produce a report to help professionals and policy makers deal with men's prostate-related healthcare.

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