

# My Dad Refuses Prostate Cancer Treatment



By [Gogs](#) November 5, 2021 3 min read

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At the time of my prostate cancer diagnosis, I had no family history. And none of my living relatives could recall a single case of prostate cancer in the family. However, that all changed after my diagnosis. To my surprise, 22 months after my [diagnosis](#), my dad also had a prostate cancer diagnosis. And that diagnosis came just 1 day before his 85th birthday.

## Urinary issues

My dad was healthy and fit, living a very active

social life and dancing 5-6 days a week. Several months before his diagnosis, he started experiencing urinary issues and was unable to pee. Unfortunately, this is a common issue as men age. Although, he wasn't too concerned, as this happened to him about ten years earlier. At that time, my dad had a TURP, and it resolved the issue.

TURP stands for transurethral resection of the prostate. It's a surgical procedure to help treat urinary issues caused by an enlarged prostate. The doctor inserts a thin tube containing a light, camera, and loop of wire into the penis. The doctor carefully guides it down the urethra. The wire loop becomes heated and used to trim away prostate tissue that's blocking urine flow. My dad jokingly refers to this procedure as the roto-rooter job.

## **Testing positive for prostate cancer**

The procedure was successful, and my dad was once again free to pee. However, the tissue samples removed tested positive for aggressive prostate cancer with a Gleason score of 4+4=8.

His doctor recommended follow-up testing that included a PSA test and a bone and CT scan. Although he agreed to have the additional tests, he wasn't concerned. Dad was too excited, thinking about his upcoming 85th birthday celebration at the local dance hall.

After the celebrations, dad went for the additional tests as requested. The results of his bone and CT scan indicated no evidence cancer had spread outside the prostate. And his PSA was 6.8 ng/ml. With that news, dad visited a urologist, a radiation oncologist, and the BC Cancer clinic to discuss options. Since no single treatment is best for everyone, it's best to seek multiple opinions. And he also spoke to me at length, sharing his thoughts and feelings and asked lots of questions.

# Choosing not to undergo treatment

After my dad carefully considered his treatment options and all the various advice, he made a decision. Due to his age and life expectancy, he opted to do nothing other than monitoring his PSA. If he were younger, he would consider and seek treatment. But at his age, he doesn't want to risk impacting the quality of his remaining years.

In his case, I believe he made the right decision. Not all prostate cancer needs treatment, particularly low-grade. Or in the case of my dad, age and life expectancy are important factors. It's a personal decision.

## Early detection

Although not all prostate cancer needs treatment, it's best to detect cancer before it

spreads. Especially if your life expectancy is high. It's important to note that prostate cancer usually doesn't have symptoms in the early stages. And without testing, cancer can be free to grow undetected. No one wants to face a cancer diagnosis, but it's far better to detect sooner than later. Early detection offers the most options, including active surveillance.

Active surveillance is close monitoring that includes regular testing and imaging. And you can decide if treatment is necessary if your test results or symptoms worsen. I know many men who have been on active surveillance for years with no need for treatment. And monitoring gives them the confidence that they can seek treatment before it escapes the prostate if cancer progresses.

And that's precisely the point of detecting prostate cancer in the early stages. To monitor and only seek treatment if necessary to prevent it from spreading.

# Putting yourself in control

Before my prostate cancer diagnosis, I thought I was in perfect health. I was active, fit, had no symptoms and no medical issues. And yet, cancer was already in the final stage before breaching my prostate. Therefore, I decided against active surveillance and opted for treatment to avoid a terminal diagnosis.

If I had not bothered to get tested, cancer would have spread by the time I developed symptoms. And that's another benefit to getting tested even without symptoms. If cancer is already advancing, you can seek treatment before it spreads. I know several men in stage-4 that wish their doctors had recommended testing several years before their terminal diagnosis.

And that's the power of early detection. You are in control by monitoring cancer to ensure it doesn't advance. Men should become

intimately familiar with their bodies and see a doctor about anything unusual. If you're unsure you are experiencing symptoms, please read my article, [Prostate Cancer Symptoms...Or Lack Thereof](#).

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