

A healthier today Rush Generations and a vital tomorrow



Your Health

6 Ways To Protect Your Prostate



Christopher Coogan, MD
Urologist

Roughly the size of a walnut, the prostate is an essential part of a man's urinary and reproductive systems.

Prostate-related issues, including an enlarged prostate and prostate cancer, become more common with age. **Christopher Coogan, MD**, a urologist at Rush, recommends a few simple steps to help keep your prostate healthy.

1. Engage in exercise. A daily routine of at least 30 minutes of vigorous physical activity can help reduce your risk for prostate diseases by 10% to 30%. Being active can reduce risk factors for prostate issues by stabilizing your hormone levels and helping you maintain a healthy weight.

2. Think zinc. The prostate gland stores zinc, which not only prevents prostate enlargement but may also help to shrink a prostate gland that is already swollen. You can get the recommended 15 milligrams per day through foods such as pumpkin seeds (in the shell), oysters, nuts and beans, or by taking a zinc supplement.

3. Eat more tomato sauce. Research has shown that lycopene, an antioxidant in tomatoes, may be associated with a reduced risk of prostate cancer. Cooked or processed products like pasta sauce and tomato paste pack a greater lycopene punch than raw tomatoes.

4. Cut the fat. A diet high in fat can cause the body to produce fewer antioxidants, which are essential to maintaining a healthy prostate. Opt for lean proteins such as chicken and fish instead of fatty red meats, and go easy on the grilling. Coogan adds that carcinogens in grilled and charred proteins can inflame the prostate.

5. Don't take selenium or vitamin E supplements. Research has shown that taking selenium supplements or vitamin E supplements can double your prostate cancer risk, depending on the concentration of selenium in your body. Coogan says you can take a multivitamin without worrying, but steer clear of these supplements.

6. Most important, get screened. Most prostate cancers don't cause symptoms until they're more advanced. So, even if you don't experience symptoms of prostate problems, it's crucial to have regular physical exams and screenings to check for prostate cancer. According to Coogan, men who are Black or have a family history of prostate cancer should start being screened at age 40; those who are white with no family history should begin screening at age 50. "The single most important thing I tell my patients is to get regular screenings," Coogan says. "We want to catch the cancer at the earliest, most treatable stage."

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Join us on Wednesday, Oct. 6, for a roundtable discussion of prostate, breast and ovarian cancers. See the [calendar insert for details.](#)

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Self-Care for Caregivers



Ellen Carbonell, LCSW
Social worker

Being a caregiver can be fulfilling and bring you a lot of pleasure — but it can also be extremely challenging. These tips from Rush social worker **Ellen Carbonell, LCSW**, can help you get the support you need to stay physically and emotionally healthy.

Rethink the idea of self-care.

“Why do you provide the care you do? It has to do with your values. You are choosing this for reasons that reflect who you are and what matters to you. As part of what matters, it’s essential to acknowledge that you have your own needs, and that your needs matter just as much as those of the people you’re caring for,” Carbonell says.

Caregivers tend to put themselves last. But if you don’t care for yourself (such as getting enough rest, exercising and doing activities you enjoy), you risk negative consequences for your own health and well-being. And when you’re not healthy, you can’t help anyone else.

Set manageable self-care goals.

Don’t put pressure on yourself to make huge changes right out of the gate. A small step can have a huge impact, particularly if you’re not used to taking care of yourself. “Think of it as carving out a little breathing room for yourself,” Carbonell explains. “It may be as small as taking a walk around the block, having a cup of coffee with a friend or reading a chapter of a good book. The key is to make sure that you’re focusing only on yourself during that time.”

Just say “no” (sometimes).

It’s important to acknowledge that you’re not superhuman. To protect your health

and well-being, it’s necessary to prioritize, set realistic expectations and, when necessary, say “No.” This might mean asking for help with a spouse’s care in the mornings so you can go to an exercise class, or telling your child that babysitting the grandkids on Saturday night is one thing too many for you that week.

Take stock so you can delegate.

The saying, “It takes a village to raise a child,” also applies to caring for older adults. Take a look at everything on your plate: Write a comprehensive list of all your caregiving responsibilities, including noting which tasks others could potentially handle. “Once you have the list, you can then refer to it whenever anyone asks if they can help,” Carbonell says. “Be sure there are both big and small asks on the list, so you can tailor the task to the person offering to help.”

When it comes to getting help, think outside the box.

Your informal network might actually be larger than you think; for instance, many people get support from their faith communities. If you’re stumped about where to look, you’ll find plenty of great resources through the Rush Caregiver Initiative. For more information or to request an assessment, call (312) 563-0350.

Join us on Wednesday, Nov. 17, for a discussion of caregiving and mental health. See the calendar insert for details.



Learning From the Voices of LGBTQ+ Older Adults

Schaalman Senior Voices aims to engage with the community to have conversations about aging, life and what matters.

In June, Howard Brown Health co-hosted “Schaalman Senior Voices: Learning From the Voices of LGBTQ+ Older Adults”, in which a panel of three older adults identifying as gay, transgender or queer shared their experiences.

The panelists discussed how the LGBTQ+ community has changed since their youth, what they wish their health care providers knew about LGBTQ+ issues and what they’d like non-LGBTQ+ people to understand about the community.

You can watch a recording of the discussion at cutt.ly/RushGenYouTube. To see more videos of people sharing what matters most as they age, visit aging.rush.edu/Shaalman.

Are you interested in recording your own video to share what matters most to you as you age? Visit bit.ly/RecordMyStory or point your smartphone camera at the code below.



Diabetic Neuropathy: Prevention Is Key



Rabia Malik, MD
Neurologist

A simple blister on your heel might not sound like a big deal. But for someone with diabetic neuropathy, the nerve damage that affects 60% to 70% of those who have diabetes, such a seemingly small problem can become a catastrophe.

As the number of Americans diagnosed with diabetes has skyrocketed — more than tripling between 1980 and 2011, to 20.9 million — so has the number of people coping with neuropathy. The thinking is that elevated blood sugar can cause damage not only to nerves, but also to the blood vessels that supply those nerves. The resulting numbness, pain and systemic issues can lead to serious health complications.

“The good news is that you can prevent diabetic neuropathy or slow its progression by keeping your blood sugars under tight control,” says **Rabia Malik, MD**, a neurologist at Rush. “Aside from medications, this can be achieved by a combination of diet modification and exercise to maintain a healthy weight.”

Signs and symptoms

Diabetic neuropathy can damage nerves throughout the body, including sensory nerves that transmit sensations, such as touch, temperature and pain; motor nerves that control movement; and autonomic nerves that control involuntary processes, such as heart rate, blood pressure and digestion.

Signs of diabetic neuropathy include the following:

- **Numbness, burning or tingling in hands and/or feet.** Numbness in the feet, the most common symptom of diabetic neuropathy, is also potentially one of the most dangerous. “Sensory loss in the feet may lead to ulcers that go unnoticed and can subsequently lead to tissue death and bone infections,” Malik says. In very severe cases, amputation may be required.

- **A diminished sense of balance**, which can lead to serious falls.
- **Digestive, urinary and genital issues**, such as nausea, constipation or diarrhea, frequent bladder infections and sexual dysfunction (e.g., erectile problems or vaginal dryness).

Malik emphasizes the importance of having a thorough medical work-up, if you think you’re experiencing a neuropathy. In patients with diabetes, neuropathy can be caused by other issues, such as nutritional deficiencies, autoimmune disorders or a tumor that’s causing pressure on a nerve.

A neurologist will typically do a thorough physical examination and order blood tests to exclude other causes of neuropathies that may mimic diabetic neuropathies. An electromyogram can objectively test the function of the nerves and the muscles.

Prevention and treatment

Diabetic neuropathy is irreversible once it has begun, so prevention is crucial. That often means getting blood sugar under control even before a diabetes diagnosis.

“People who are borderline diabetic are at risk of developing nerve damage as well,” Malik says. “In fact, in some people the symptoms of neuropathy may be the first sign of diabetes.”

For those already diagnosed, maintaining tight control of blood sugar (at a daily level around 100 mg/dL) is critical to slowing neuropathy’s progression: Neuropathy generally appears

after your blood sugar has been poorly controlled for some time and worsens when levels remain too high.

Malik and her fellow neurologists use a number of strategies — sometimes in combination — to help patients manage diabetic neuropathy:

- **Physical therapy** to strengthen core muscles and improve coordination.
- For painful neuropathies, **heat, massage, analgesics and transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation (TENS)**, in which an electric current is used to modulate nerves’ signals to the brain
- **Topical local medications**, such as lidocaine gel or patches that numb pain
- **Anticonvulsants or antidepressants** to block pain signals from the central nervous system
- Alternative therapies, such as **biofeedback and acupuncture**

People who have diabetes should also check their feet every day and wear shoes that fit well, have appropriate support and cushioning to protect their feet.

However, by far the most powerful way to address diabetic neuropathy is to improve overall health, control blood sugar and have a thorough understanding of the consequences of uncontrolled diabetes.

Join us on Wednesday, Nov. 3, for a discussion about keeping your feet healthy if you have diabetes. See the [calendar insert](#) for details.

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PLEASE NOTE: All physicians featured in this publication are on the medical staff of Rush. Some of the physicians are in private practice and, as independent practitioners, are not employees or agents of Rush.
Rush is an academic health system comprising Rush University Medical Center, Rush Copley Medical Center and Rush Oak Park Hospital.

10 Conditions Acupuncture Can Help Treat

Acupuncture, a centuries-old practice originating in China, can help relieve pain and a variety of other symptoms and conditions. During an acupuncture session, a board-certified, licensed provider gently inserts sterile, hair-thin needles at particular points in the body.

Research suggests that acupuncture stimulates the central nervous system to release natural hormones like endorphins (pain control) and serotonin (relaxation) that promote physical health and emotional well-being. Acupuncture can treat many more conditions than those listed here — if you're curious about whether acupuncture might be helpful for you, talk to your primary care physician.

Anxiety

Depression

GI disturbances

Hay fever

Headaches

Knee pain

Low back pain

Nausea

Neck pain

Sciatica

Join us on Wednesday, Oct. 20,
for a lecture on complementary medicine.
See the [calendar insert](#) for details.

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Fall 2021 Free Health and Aging Events

All Rush Generations fall events will be held virtually. You can view the following lectures online or listen on your phone.

For updates on Rush Generations programs, sign up for our emails at bit.ly/RushGenerations.



To join these lectures online,

visit the Rush Generations YouTube page at the time of the event:

cutt.ly/RushGenYouTube.



To dial in via phone (audio only):

Call **(312) 626-6799** at the time of the event and enter meeting ID 897 0286 9566#.

October

Cancer Roundtable: Breast, Ovarian and Prostate Cancer

**Wednesday, Oct. 6
1 to 2:30 p.m.**

A cancer diagnosis can feel life altering not only for the patient, but for family members and caregivers as well. At this lecture, you'll get an overview of breast, ovarian and prostate cancer; learn the signs and symptoms that mean you should talk to your doctor; and hear about current treatment options.

Complementary Medicine

**Wednesday, Oct. 20
1 to 2:30 p.m.**

Managing your health is about much more than taking medications and keeping doctors' appointments — it's also about implementing best practices to take care of your health and well-being. Join us to learn about the many forms of medicine outside of traditional Western medicine that can help you achieve your health goals.

November

Diabetes and Podiatry

**Wednesday, Nov. 3
1 to 2:30 p.m.**

If you have diabetes, it's essential to check your feet regularly and have your health care provider check your feet at every appointment. You'll learn more about why it's important to check your feet, how to check them properly and when to talk to your doctor.

Caregiving and Mental Health

**Wednesday, Nov. 17
1 to 2:30 p.m.**

Caregiving is an essential role that often leads to mental health challenges for caregivers. Join us for a lecture on caregiving, its associated challenges and ways you can protect yourself and stay healthy.

December

The New Normal

**Wednesday, Dec. 8
1 to 2:30 p.m.**

For more than a year, we've had to adapt to restrictions of the pandemic. As guidance for preventing COVID-19 continues to evolve, we may start envisioning our next new normal. Join us for a discussion on learning to continue to adjust while being mindful of physical safety and peace of mind.

Holiday Highs and Lows

**Wednesday, Dec. 15
1 to 2:30 p.m.**

It's that time of year again: Join us for our annual conversation about holiday highs and lows. We'll share a holiday-themed activity while also discussing how to handle the challenges that may come with the holiday season.

Classes and Workshops

These fall classes and workshops will be held virtually, but we may also offer in-person workshops that you can join. To find out about upcoming virtual and in-person workshops not listed here, call program coordinator Padraic Stanley at **(312) 942-2089**.

To participate in virtual sessions, you'll need access to the Zoom app through a computer, tablet or smartphone with a webcam. To reserve your place and receive a Zoom link to your event, please call **(800) 757-0202** and be ready to provide a valid phone number and email address.

For updates from Rush Generations, sign up for our emails at **bit.ly/RushGenerations**.

Classes

Gentle Chair Yoga

Thursdays, Sept. 30 to Nov. 18
11 a.m. to noon
\$40 for the eight-class session

Chair Strength

Mondays, Oct. 11 to Nov. 29
1:30 to 2:30 p.m.
\$40 for the eight-class session

Workshop

Learning To Live Well With Chronic Pain

Mondays, Oct. 4 to Nov. 15, 12:30 to 3 p.m.

This workshop will give you useful strategies and an action plan for taking control of your chronic pain, covering everything from how to deal with tough emotions to ways you can become more active.

Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP) for Seniors*

Wednesdays, Oct. 6 to Nov. 10, 10:30 a.m. to noon

The WRAP program supports you in making your own choices for improved well-being, physical health and quality of life. You'll get support to build on your personal strengths and figure out what works best for you.

**You must be at least 60 years old to participate in this workshop.*

Live Well, Be Well: Take Charge of Your Health

Fridays, Oct. 29 to Dec. 17, 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
(no class on Friday, Nov. 26)

This fun, interactive workshop is designed to help you take charge of your health and manage chronic conditions. You'll get tips and strategies for healthy eating, dealing with frustration or lack of energy, building a more effective relationship with your doctor and more.

Both Rush University Medical Center and Rush Oak Park Hospital comply with applicable federal civil rights laws and do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability or sex.

Español (Spanish)

ATENCIÓN: si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Llame al 1-312-563-2987 (TTY: 1-312-563-2987).

Polski (Polish)

UWAGA: jeżeli mówisz po polsku, możesz skorzystać z bezpłatnej pomocy językowej. Zadzwoń pod numer 1-312-563-2987 (TTY: 1-312-563-2987).

繁體中文 (Chinese)

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한국어 (Korean)

주의: 한국어를 사용하시는 경우, 언어 지원 서비스를 무료로 이용하실 수 있습니다. 1-312-563-2987 (TTY: 1-312-563-2987) 번으로 전화해 주십시오.

Tagalog

PAUNAWA: Kung nagsasalita ka ng Tagalog, maaari kang gumamit ng mga serbisyo ng tulong sa wika nang walang bayad. Tumawag sa 1-312-563-2987 (TTY: 1-312-563-2987).

العربية (Arabic)

ملاحظة: إذا كنت تتحدث اللغة العربية، فإن خدمات المساعدة اللغوية متاحة لك مجانًا. اتصل بالرقم 1-312-563-2987 (TTY: 1-312-563-2987).

Русский (Russian)

ВНИМАНИЕ: Если вы говорите на русском языке, то вам доступны бесплатные услуги перевода. Звоните по телефону 1-312-563-2987 (телетайп: 1-312-563-2987).

ગુજરાતી (Gujarati)

સૂચના: જો તમે ગુજરાતી બોલતા હો, તો નિ:શુલ્ક ભાષા સહાય સેવાઓ તમારા માટે ઉપલબ્ધ છે. ફોન કરો 1-312-563-2987 (TTY: 1-312-563-2987).

اُردُو (Urdu)

خبردار: اگر آپ اردو بولتے ہیں، تو آپ کو زبان کی مدد کی خدمات مفت میں دستیاب ہیں۔ کال کریں 1-312-563-2987 (TTY: 1-312-563-2987)۔

Tiếng Việt (Vietnamese)

CHÚ Ý: Nếu bạn nói Tiếng Việt, có các dịch vụ hỗ trợ ngôn ngữ miễn phí dành cho bạn. Gọi số 1-312-563-2987 (TTY: 1-312-563-2987).

Italiano (Italian)

ATTENZIONE: In caso la lingua parlata sia l'italiano, sono disponibili servizi di assistenza linguistica gratuiti. Chiamare il numero 1-312-563-2987 (TTY: 1-312-563-2987).

हिंदी (Hindi)

ध्यान दें: यदि आप हिंदी बोलते हैं तो आपके लिए मुफ्त में भाषा सहायता सेवाएं उपलब्ध हैं। 1-312-563-2987 (TTY: 1-312-563-2987) पर कॉल करें।

Français (French)

ATTENTION: Si vous parlez français, des services d'aide linguistique vous sont proposés gratuitement. Appelez le 1-312-563-2987 (ATS: 1-312-563-2987).

λληνικά (Greek)

ΠΡΟΣΟΧΗ: Αν μιλάτε ελληνικά, στη διάθεσή σας βρίσκονται υπηρεσίες γλωσσικής υποστήριξης, οι οποίες παρέχονται δωρεάν. Καλέστε 1-312-563-2987 (TTY: 1-312-563-2987).

Deutsch (German)

ACHTUNG: Wenn Sie Deutsch sprechen, stehen Ihnen kostenlos sprachliche Hilfsdienstleistungen zur Verfügung. Rufnummer: 1-312-563-2987 (TTY: 1-312-563-2987).