



FAQS: BENIGN PROSTATE

UNDERSTANDING YOUR PATHOLOGY REPORT: A FAQ SHEET

When your prostate was biopsied, the samples taken were studied under the microscope by a specialized doctor with many years of training called a pathologist. The pathology report tells your treating doctor the diagnosis in each of the samples to help manage your care. This FAQ sheet is designed to help you understand the medical language used in the pathology report.

1. What does it mean if my biopsy report says “benign prostate tissue” or “benign prostate glands” or “benign prostatic hyperplasia”?

There is no cancer on the biopsy sample of your prostate.

2. If my biopsy says that there is no prostate cancer can I be sure that I don't have prostate cancer?

In a small number of cases the biopsy can miss cancer that is present in the prostate. Depending on your findings on rectal exam or PSA blood test level, you may need a repeat needle biopsy at some time in the future. Your urologist is the best person to discuss this with you.

3. What does it mean if my biopsy report also says there is “acute inflammation” (acute prostatitis) or “chronic inflammation” (chronic prostatitis)?

In some cases inflammation may increase the PSA blood test level but in most cases it is of no importance and has nothing to do with prostate cancer.

4. What does it mean if my biopsy report also says “atrophy” or “adenosis” or “atypical adenomatous hyperplasia” or “seminal vesicle”?

All of these terms are things that the pathologist sees under the microscope that in some cases can look like cancer but are of no importance when seen on the biopsy and has nothing to do with cancer.

5. What does it mean if my biopsy report mentions special studies using high molecular weight cytokeratin (HMWCK), ck903, ck5/6, p63, AMACR (racemase), 34BE12, or PIN4 cocktail?

These are special tests that the pathologist sometimes uses to help make the diagnosis of prostate cancer. Not all cases need these tests. Whether your report does or does not mention these tests has no bearing on the accuracy of your diagnosis.

6. What does it mean if my biopsy report mentions the word “core”?

The urologist samples the prostate by removing thin threads of tissue with a hollow needle, each one referred to as a “core” from different areas of the prostate.