



## Mr George Koufogiannis

B.Sc(Hons), MBBS,  
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### Urological Surgeon

#### Dr Koufogiannis' special interests include:

- Robotic surgery; upper and lower tract
- Voiding dysfunction including laser prostate surgery, urolift and rezum
- Implant, continence surgery and urodynamics
- All aspects of general urology; laser stone surgery, vasectomy, circumcisions.

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# Understanding Your Prostate: A Guide for Men

## A Case Study by Mr George Koufogiannis

### What is the prostate?

The prostate is a small gland about the size of a walnut, located below the bladder and in front of the rectum. It surrounds the urethra, the tube that carries urine and semen out of the body. Its main job is to produce fluid that nourishes and protects sperm, forming part of semen.

### Why do prostates Enlarge?

As men age, the prostate often enlarges, a condition called benign prostatic hyperplasia (BPH). This is not cancer. BPH is usually caused by hormonal changes and can lead to urinary symptoms like difficulty starting urination or frequent urination.

### Does an Enlarged Prostate Mean Cancer?

No. An enlarged prostate does not mean you have prostate cancer. BPH and prostate cancer are different conditions, though they can cause similar symptoms. Only medical tests like PSA blood tests, MRI scans, and biopsies can confirm a diagnosis.

### What Is Prostate Cancer?

Prostate cancer occurs when cells in the prostate grow abnormally and form a tumor. It's one of the most common cancers in men, especially over the age of 50. Some prostate cancers grow slowly and may not cause symptoms, while others can be more aggressive.

### Prostate Cancer: Treatment Options

Treatment depends on the stage, grade, and location of the cancer, as well as your overall health and personal preferences.

#### The main options available in Australia include:

- **Active Surveillance**
  - For low-risk, slow-growing cancers.
  - Involves regular PSA tests, MRIs, and biopsies.
  - No immediate treatment unless the cancer shows signs of progression 1.
- **Watchful Waiting**
  - Similar to active surveillance but less intensive.
  - Often recommended for older men or those with other health issues.
  - Focuses on managing symptoms if they arise 2.



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- **Surgery**
  - Radical prostatectomy removes the prostate, part of the urethra, and seminal vesicles.
  - May include nerve-sparing techniques to preserve erectile function.
  - Can be performed via open, laparoscopic, or robot-assisted methods 1.
- **Radiation Therapy**

Can be used alone or after surgery.

Includes:

  - External beam radiation therapy (EBRT)
  - Brachytherapy (internal radiation)
  - Often combined with hormone therapy for higher-risk cases 2.
- **Hormone Therapy (ADT)**
  - Reduces testosterone, which fuels prostate cancer growth.
  - Includes medications or surgical removal of the testicles.
  - Used for advanced or recurrent cancer 1.
- **Chemotherapy**
  - Used for advanced or metastatic prostate cancer.
  - Common drugs include docetaxel and cabazitaxel.
  - May be combined with other therapies 1.
- **Immunotherapy**
  - Stimulates the immune system to attack cancer cells.
  - Includes treatments like Sipuleucel-T and checkpoint inhibitors 1.
- **Targeted Therapy**
  - Uses drugs that specifically attack cancer cells with certain genetic mutations.
  - Includes PARP inhibitors like olaparib and rucaparib 1.
- **Focal Therapy**
  - Uses high-intensity sound waves or lasers to destroy cancer cells.
  - Still under clinical evaluation and not widely used 2.
- **Palliative Care**
  - Focuses on symptom relief and quality of life.
  - May include pain management, radiation, and emotional support 2.

### Next Steps

If you or a loved one is facing a prostate cancer diagnosis, speak with your healthcare team about the best treatment options for your situation. You can also access support through:

### Resources:

Cancer Council Australia – [cancer.org.au](http://cancer.org.au)

Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia – [pcf.org.au](http://pcf.org.au)

Movember Foundation – [movember.com](http://movember.com)