

09. What tests are available for men who have prostate problems?

Doctors use the following tests to detect prostate abnormalities, but these tests cannot show whether abnormalities are cancer or another, less serious condition. The results from these tests will help the doctor decide whether to check the patient further for signs of cancer.

□ Digital Rectal Exam -- the doctor inserts a lubricated, gloved finger into the rectum and feels the prostate through the rectal wall to check for hard or lumpy areas. A recent study revealed that men with low prostate specific antigen levels, or PSA, may still have prostate cancer.

□ Blood test for prostate specific antigen or PSA -- a lab measures the levels of PSA in a blood sample. The level of PSA may rise in men who have prostate cancer, an enlarged prostate, or infection in the prostate.