Prostatitis

The prostate gland is about the size of a walnut. It sits just below your bladder and in front of the rectum. The prostate gland also wraps around the urethra. The urethra is the tube that passes urine from your bladder.

Prostatitis is inflammation of the prostate gland that can cause swelling and pain.
There are three types of prostatitis:

**Non-bacterial Prostatitis**
This is the most common type of prostatitis. Stress or a decrease in sexual activity can cause this type of prostatitis. Stress tightens the pelvic muscles, which may cause urine to back up into the prostate. The prostate gland also helps make fluid for semen. When a man has a decrease in sexual activity and ejaculates less often, this may cause a backup of fluid which plugs the ducts in the prostate. Symptoms may include:
- The need to urinate more often
- Pain in the lower abdomen or lower back

**Acute Bacterial Prostatitis**
This type of prostatitis can be caused by bacteria, a virus or sexually transmitted diseases (STD’s). Symptoms may include:
- Fever and chills
- Low back pain
- Pain with urination
- The need to urinate more often
- A weak stream when urinating
- Urinary retention (unable to empty the bladder)

**Chronic Prostatitis**
This may be caused by bacterial infection or inflammation in the prostate gland. Stress and infrequent sex may make this problem worse. Symptoms may include:
- Pain with urination
- The need to urinate more often
- Low back pain
- Urinary retention (unable to empty the bladder)
How do I know if I have Prostatitis?

Your doctor will check your prostate gland and collect a urine sample to see if the problem is in the urethra, bladder or prostate.

To check the prostate gland, your doctor will do a digital rectal exam. During this exam, your doctor will insert a lubricated gloved finger into your rectum to feel the size and shape of your prostate. While checking your prostate, the doctor may press the prostate with a finger. This is called a prostate massage. Prostate massage forces fluid out of your prostate and into the urethra. All urine and fluids will be sent to the lab to be checked.

How is Prostatitis treated?

The treatment will depend on what type of prostatitis you have.

Non-bacterial prostatitis treatment may include using an anti-inflammatory medicine or a muscle relaxant medicine. The doctor may have you drink more fluids, soak in a hot bath, relax when urinating or ejaculate more often.

Acute prostatitis is treated with antibiotics, usually for at least three weeks. The doctor also may have you try stool softeners, bed rest and drink more fluids.

Chronic prostatitis may be treated with antibiotics or other medicines. If medicine does not help, your doctor will talk with you about other treatments.