

## **New research breaking the silence on a serious but treatable prostate condition affecting 1 in 2 West Australian men aged 50+**

**A common, non-cancerous prostate condition affecting almost 300,000 West Australian men aged 50+ years,<sup>1-3</sup> is seriously compromising their physical, mental and social health and wellbeing, new Australian research reveals.<sup>4</sup>**

**Benign prostatic hyperplasia (BPH), or an 'enlarged prostate', affects 50 to 60 per cent of men aged in their 60s, and a staggering 80 to 90 per cent of those aged 70+ years.<sup>5, 6</sup> Yet concerningly, the condition is currently under-diagnosed and under-treated,<sup>7</sup> with new research confirming only 20 per cent of West Australian men aged 50+ years with symptoms have been formally diagnosed.<sup>4</sup>**

According to Director of Uro-Oncology, and Head of Robotic Surgery, Chris O'Brien Lifehouse, and Urology Department Head, Blacktown Mount Druitt Hospital, Professor Henry Woo, Sydney, West Australian men fail to recognise the commonness, and potential seriousness of the urological condition.<sup>4</sup>

"Living with an enlarged prostate is life-disrupting. An enlarged prostate compromises the lives of almost three in four (74 per cent) affected West Australian men.<sup>4</sup> A concerning 58 per cent experience an urgent need to pee, while 61 per cent make regular toilet trips at night,"<sup>4</sup> said Prof Woo.

"This in turn, affects their energy levels, concentration, and productivity, and regularly disturbs their partner's sleep.<sup>8</sup>

"In fact, sleep disturbance is a daily challenge for the nearly half (47 per cent) of the West Australian men battling the condition," Prof Woo said.

"Other common lower urinary tract symptoms (LUTS) associated with an enlarged prostate include poor urine flow, difficulty starting and ending flow, peeing more often than usual, and a feeling of not being able to completely empty the bladder.<sup>4, 9-11</sup>

"For the 50 per cent of those living with an enlarged prostate, needing to know the location of the closest toilets causes feelings of anxiety, with more than one in five (21 per cent) reporting "feeling anxious" every day<sup>4</sup> – symptoms which have also been linked to depression, anxiety, and stress,"<sup>12</sup> said Prof Woo.

"Importantly, men do not need to suffer in silence, because effective treatment options are available."

According to Principal and Consultant Urologist Surgeon at Swan Urology, Dr Elayne Ooi, Perth, while a healthy prostate resembles the size of a walnut, an enlarged prostate can grow to the size of a mandarin, or even a lemon.<sup>13</sup>

"A normal prostate varies in size. Because there is no defined relationship between prostate size and symptom severity,<sup>14</sup> even men with a small prostate enlargement may experience significant urinary symptoms.

"As the prostate grows, it causes obstruction, and can block the bladder, resulting in a need to urinate frequently, and disrupting urine outflow,"<sup>15</sup> Dr Ooi said.

"Untreated symptoms may also lead to urinary tract infections, kidney stones and kidney damage,<sup>10</sup> reinforcing the importance of early, proactive medical advice.

"Importantly, an enlarged prostate, and its associated symptoms, are treatable,"<sup>16</sup> said Dr Ooi.

“Men living with symptoms of the condition should seek professional advice and explore effective treatment options with their doctor.

Urological Society of Australia and New Zealand (USANZ) President, Professor Helen O’Connell AO, Melbourne, said too many Aussie men living with an enlarged prostate are not seeking timely medical care.

“An enlarged prostate is a reversible cause of bladder symptoms in ageing men.”<sup>10, 17</sup>

“The longer the male has had the problem, and the more severe it is, the less likely it is to be fully reversible,”<sup>18, 19</sup> Prof O’Connell said.

“More than four in five (83 per cent) of men are open to seeking treatment, yet fewer than 40 per cent are really doing so.”<sup>4</sup>

“Among those who do choose to seek treatment, one in five (20 per cent) elect to endure symptoms for six months before doing so,”<sup>4</sup> said Prof O’Connell.

“A man’s enlarged prostate also affects the quality of life of their partner, adversely affecting relationships.”<sup>20</sup>

Electrical technician and father-to-three, Patrick, 59, Perth, endured frequent urination, a sense of incomplete bladder emptying, an urge to urinate, and a weak urinary stream for just shy of 10 years. Eventually, his symptoms grew so severe, that he sometimes felt the urge to use the toilet several times per hour, even after ‘emptying’ his bladder. Over time, Patrick began to question whether he had developed “an old man’s problem”, or otherwise. Fortunately, he was aware potential prostate-related issues may signal something more sinister, and chose to seek medical advice.

“I was familiar with prostate cancer. My dad was diagnosed with the disease at 80 years of age. He was advised it was a slow growing cancer and treatment was not necessary, as old age would claim him first,” Patrick said.

After visiting his GP, Patrick was diagnosed with an overactive bladder (OAB) caused by an enlarged prostate (not prostate cancer), leading to Lower Urinary Tract Syndrome (LUTS). For two years he used medication to help reduce both the size of his prostate, and to control his frequency issue.

“Eventually, I elected to have a minimally invasive procedure that enabled a faster recovery,” said Patrick.

Nowadays, Patrick urges other men who suspect they may be living with symptoms of an enlarged prostate, to seek help without delay.

“By not undergoing a regular health check, you allow a potential benign growth, or quiet killer, to sneak up on you.

“Don’t jeopardise your health. Monitor your symptoms, keep a record of any changes, and if things seem odd, visit your GP straight away,” said Patrick.

**To learn more about symptoms, management and treatment of an enlarged prostate, visit your doctor or head to [www.fixmyflow.com.au](http://www.fixmyflow.com.au).**

#### **About YouGov market research**

Boston Scientific commissioned YouGov to perform an online quantitative survey on benign prostatic hyperplasia (BPH), involving a nationally representative sample of 1,011 Australian men aged 50+ years between July 4 to 10, 2024.<sup>4</sup> The data was weighted by age and region to reflect the latest Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) population estimates of Australian men over 50 years of age.

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## AVAILABLE FOR INTERVIEW

EXPERT	
<b>Dr Elayne Ooi</b>	Principal and Consultant Urologist Surgeon, Swan Urology; Consultant Urologist, Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital; and Visiting Medical Practitioner, Hollywood Private Hospital, <i>PERTH</i>
AUSSIES WHO LIVED WITH / AFFECTED BY AN ENLARGED PROSTATE	
<b>Patrick, 59</b>	Electrical technician and father-to-three who endured enlarged prostate symptoms for almost 10 years, <i>PERTH</i>
<b>Bruce, 72</b>	Former police officer and semi-retired IT Technician who endured symptoms of an enlarged prostate for more than a decade, <i>WHEATBELT, WA</i>
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<b>VNR</b>	<a href="http://enlargedprostatemediakit.com.au/vnr">enlargedprostatemediakit.com.au/vnr</a>
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