

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

**A common, non-cancerous prostate condition affecting almost 194,000 South 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 South 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, South 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 more than four in five (82 per cent) affected South Australian men.<sup>4</sup> A concerning 74 per cent experience an urgent need to pee, while 59 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 more than two in five (45 per cent) South 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 nearly eight in 10 (78 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 (22 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 Specialist Urologist, St Andrew's Hospital, Dr James Aspinall, Adelaide, 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 Aspinall 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 Aspinall.

"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>

In 2021, professional engineer, father-to-two and avid cyclist, Keith, 61, Adelaide, was diagnosed with an enlarged prostate after living with symptoms for five years before seeking medical advice. Keith visited his GP in 2021 complaining of enlarged prostate symptoms which had "become too difficult to live with." He was subsequently diagnosed with an enlarged prostate.

Despite leading an active lifestyle, and visiting his GP for an annual "grease and oil change", Keith's symptoms nonetheless, continued to progress over time.

"My symptoms began to compromise my life. I couldn't sleep soundly throughout the night without having to visit the toilet, which disturbed both my sleep, and my wife's.

"Eventually, I had to get up around five times a night before my diagnosis," Keith said.

"Unfortunately, I waited until I was completely sleep deprived, and exhausted, before seeking medical treatment.

"In hindsight, I should've addressed the problem much earlier," Keith said

According to Keith, stigma weighs heavily on the topic of men's health.

"Men tend to bury their heads in the sand over health-related problems until they get so bad, that they're forced to seek help.

"We tend to suffer in silence. Personally, I know many older men who choose to put up with, and ignore their health conditions, at their peril," Keith said.

"If you suspect you're living with symptoms of an enlarged prostate, don't ignore them. Speak to your GP, and get educated.

"An enlarged prostate won't resolve on its own. Without treatment, it will only get worse," said Keith.

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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AUSSIE WHO LIVED WITH AN ENLARGED PROSTATE	
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