

# Treatment Choices for Early Stage Prostate Cancer

## How to use this table

**Read across** to learn the advantages and disadvantages of each treatment.

**Read down** to compare treatments.

	Advantages	Disadvantages
<b>Watchful Waiting</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is low in cost (time and money).</li> <li>• No side effects or complications from the treatment itself.</li> <li>• May never need active treatment.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prostate cancer may spread and become incurable.</li> <li>• Prostate cancer may get bigger and cause symptoms.</li> <li>• May lead to more cancer deaths than surgery for cancers found because of symptoms.</li> <li>• Involves living with uncertainty.</li> </ul>
<b>Surgery</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May remove all the prostate cancer.</li> <li>• Gives best idea on how big the cancer is.</li> <li>• May lead to fewer cancer deaths than watchful waiting in cancers found because of symptoms.</li> <li>• Avoids prostate inflammation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The cancer may not be completely removed.</li> <li>• May have problems during surgery.</li> <li>• Requires you to be in a hospital.</li> <li>• May have problems having erections.</li> <li>• May have problems holding urine.</li> <li>• May have limited activity for several weeks.</li> <li>• Rarely, may die as a result of surgery.</li> </ul>
<b>External "beam" radiation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May kill all the prostate cancer.</li> <li>• Usually not as hard on your body as surgery.</li> <li>• Do not need to be admitted to a hospital.</li> <li>• May have fewer problems with holding urine than surgery.</li> <li>• May have fewer problems with having erections than surgery. These develop more gradually.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The cancer may not be completely destroyed.</li> <li>• Have to go to radiation center for several weeks.</li> <li>• May have erection problems later on.</li> <li>• Rectum and bladder may become inflamed, so may have diarrhea, rectal bleeding, and urination problems.</li> <li>• May feel tired, weak during treatment.</li> <li>• Surgery may be more difficult if radiation is unsuccessful.</li> </ul>
<b>Internal "seed" radiation (Brachytherapy)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May kill all the prostate cancer.</li> <li>• Not as hard on your body as surgery.</li> <li>• Do not need to be admitted to a hospital.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The cancer may not be completely destroyed.</li> <li>• May have problems having erections.</li> <li>• May have problems controlling bowels.</li> <li>• The procedure has not been used as long as the others. So, the chances of cure are less well known.</li> <li>• Rectum and bladder may become inflamed, so may have diarrhea, rectal bleeding, and urination problems.</li> </ul>