Benign prostatic hypertrophy

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Benign prostatic hypertrophy is an extremely common condition affecting as many as 90% of men over the age of 70 years according to the National Institutes of Health. The gold standard surgical treatment is currently transurethral resection of the prostate (TURP). Side effects of this procedure include disruption of sexual function which many, particularly young patients, find unacceptable. A number of minimally invasive procedures have recently been developed including transurethral microwave therapy (TUMT), transurethral needle ablation (TUNA), transurethral electrovaporisation (TUEVP) and laser surgery. However, knowledge of these treatments amongst patients and professionals is somewhat limited. The following is a review of selected websites which discuss the condition and its current management.

www.prostate-research.org.uk

This is the official website of Prostate Research Campaign UK, the first research charity in the field of prostate disease. It is aimed at patients and professionals and is both extremely informative and easy to use. Included is up-to-date information on symptoms, signs, complimentary treatments and active surveillance. Clear, easily down-loadable diagrams accompany the descriptions of many of the conservative and surgical treatment methods. Indications for treatment as well as immediate postoperative symptoms and long-term outcomes are discussed in detail. The descriptions of the minimally invasive therapies are brief but do include a note on patient selection for laser surgery. There is also a useful section on frequently asked questions aimed at patients, links to publications, free information leaflets and posters which can be ordered from the charity. This is an excellent website which is well suited to the charity's aims of training healthcare professionals and the provision of free information.****

www.prostatehealth.com

This American website is aimed mainly at healthcare professionals. The site has a number of drug company sponsors and their logos are irritatingly featured on every page. The descriptions of the available treatments are very limited. There is a link to the American Urologic Symptom Index used by urologists world-wide to quantify the severity of patients' symptoms. This interactive section requires installation of Adobe Flash Player and allows users to calculate their individual symptom score and determine what action to take next. This feature is only moderately useful as, regardless of their score, patients are advised to see their doctor for more information. The site does have very good links to prominent journals and urological associations. Overall, this site is disappointing but could easily be improved by the inclusion of detailed diagrams and a discussion of the minimally invasive therapies.***

www.urologychannel.com

This American website was developed by healthcommunities.com, a company which provides physician-developed patient education to

consumers. The site covers a wide range of urological conditions and has a search engine powered by Google allowing users to search both the site itself and the web extensively. There is a distinct lack of diagrams, but this is compensated for (to an extent) by the inclusion of purpose-made videos describing benign prostatic hypertrophy and related conditions. The authors should be commended for their efforts on the section describing the currently available treatment options, but patients should be advised to seek guidance from a urologist prior to reaching any conclusions on their treatment modality. In summary, this is a valuable information resource on the web with multiple links to other relevant websites where appropriate. Unfortunately, in keeping with several other such websites, it is very commercial, with an overwhelming number of advertisements displayed at all times, detracting from its value.***

www.mayoclinic.org

This is the official website of the world famous Mayo Clinic. It is particularly suited to patients, as well as doctors and nurses in training. The section on benign prostatic hypertrophy is concise, comprehensive, and easy to read. Diagrams are available where needed and the site also features a 'decision guide', which is probably the best guide to benign prostatic hypertrophy aimed at lay people we have found. Here, the user follows a step-by-step analysis of the problem and all its potential solutions. There are thorough lists of all the 'pros & cons' for each therapy, as well as a video of a urologist answering frequently asked questions on benign prostatic hypertrophy. Also available are case history videos of patients who chose different treatment modalities and their subsequent outcomes. The website allows users to subscribe to newsletters, review publications from the Mayo Clinic and use a link to MedlinePlus. All in all, this is arguably the best website currently available on benign prostatic hypertrophy.*****

www.prostate-cancer.org.uk

This patient-orientated website was created by The Prostate Cancer Charity mainly to increase awareness of prostatic malignancy. It does, however, have an easily accessible section on benign prostatic hypertrophy via the information section of the home page. An overview of the aetiology, presenting symptoms and signs, investigations and management options is clearly laid out in bullet-point style. There are also useful tips on life-style changes that may help avoid surgery and an excellent section on prostate specific antigen (PSA) testing and the controversial issues surrounding its use. The advantages and disadvantages of the various management options are discussed including the minimally invasive therapies. Multilingual leaflets and posters can be downloaded via the web or in PDF format (English only). The main drawback of this site is that the benign prostatic hypertrophy section is rather text heavy and because the website was set-up specifically to address prostate cancer, whilst giving a good overview of benign prostatic hypertrophy, it is not as detailed as other sites.***

www.healthscout.com

This site is part of the extended family of websites under the umbrella of <www.excite.com>. It is basically a patient-orientated health

encyclopaedia and covers an extremely broad range of conditions, including those of the urinary tract. The important facts about benign prostatic hypertrophy are presented in a logical fashion, although the text is sometimes vague and 'pros & cons' of some of the treatments are not discussed. There is no FAQ section and only a small rudimentary part on guidance on what to ask a physician during consultation. Altogether, this is a very average effort into exploring and educating the public on what is a very common condition. The website would benefit from editing the information and adding some simple diagrams.**

Planter fasciitis

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Plantar fasciitis is the most common cause of inferior heel pain. Its aetiology is poorly understood by many, which has led to a confusion in terminology. It is said to affect patients between the ages of 8–80 years, but is most common in middle-aged women and younger, predominantly male, runners. What follows is a review of selected internet sites providing up-to-date information for both orthopaedic surgeons and their patients.

The Physician and Sportsmedicine

http://www.physsportsmed.com/issues/2002/07_02/fields.htm

The Physician and Sportsmedicine is a peer-reviewed, monthly journal serving the practicing physician's professional and personal interests in the medical aspects of exercise, sports, and fitness. This is an American website based in New York which offers an excellent resource for orthopaedic surgeons in general and those with an interest in foot and ankle surgery. Topics covered include pathology, key clinical findings, and studies of treatment options and treatment approach. The site provides an overview of plantar fasciitis and describes the evidence behind the treatment options. The site lacks detailed images or interactive content, but does give a concise review on the subject and is a good resource for orthopaedic trainees.***

The American Academy of Family Physicians

<http://www.aafp.org/afp/990415ap/2200.html>

This is the official site of the American Academy of Family Physicians. The topic entitled 'Plantar Fasciitis and Other Causes of Heel Pain' discusses the aetiology, presenting symptoms, diagnosis, treatment options and a review of the differential diagnosis of other causes of heel pain. The authors of this review are podiatrists and the treatment options including surgical management are well described. This website is of value to orthopaedic surgeons and podiatrists alike and reminds the treating surgeon of the multiple differentials of heel pain and the treatment modalities of each condition. The site contains few diagrams and concentrates predominantly on the treatment of the condition but is, nonetheless, a valuable source of information.**

British Medical Journal

<http://bmj.bmjournals.com/cgi/content/full/315/7101/172>

Published by the *British Medical Journal*, this article provides an excellent overview on planter fasciitis. It is based on the experience of the authors from the Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital at Stanmore and describes recent concepts that have changed in its management. The article is well laid out and covers the aetiology, diagnosis, examination, investigation and treatment of the condition. There are several diagrams and illustrations as well as summary points that emphasise the important issues. Concise and practical reviews on the investigations required in managing the condition are described and it is well referenced throughout. An excellent resource for orthopaedic surgeons and GPs with an interest in foot and ankle surgery.****

e-medicine

<http://www.emedicine.com/pmr/topic107.htm>

This offers an excellent resource for the orthopaedic surgeon, giving comprehensive clear information which is well referenced. It includes logical subheadings for background, pathophysiology, symptoms and signs, diagnosis and treatment. The site emphasises the importance of physical therapy in the treatment of the condition and describes an intensive rehabilitation programme as well as other modalities of non-surgical treatment including shockwave therapy and Botulinum toxin A injections. It is an excellent concise and comprehensive site.****

Wheless Textbook of Orthopedics

http://www.whelessonline.com/ortho/plantar_fasciitis

This site provides a wealth of information to the orthopaedic surgeon, giving comprehensive technical information. Topics covered include the pathophysiology, examination and treatment of planter fasciitis. There are links to references that relate to the subject including planter fascia release where the anatomy of the fascia and the procedure are described. Wheless on-line is an essential source of information to any orthopaedic surgeon and provides an excellent concise review on planter fasciitis and several valuable references. Highly recommended.****

The Internet Society of Orthopaedic Surgery and Trauma

<http://www.orthogate.org/patient-education/foot/plantar-fasciitis-heel-pain.html>

This is the official site of the Internet Society of Orthopaedic Surgery and Trauma and is predominantly targeted towards patients. The site provides a concise and practical overview of planter fasciitis describing the anatomy, causes, diagnosis and treatment options. The site has good illustrations of the anatomy of the foot and is jargon-free making it reader friendly. A useful resource for patients and medical students.**

Heelspurs

http://heelspurs.com/_intro.html

This is an interesting website dedicated to planter fasciitis. It has been written by an ex-patient and provides excellent detailed and comprehensive information on symptoms, causes and treatments available. It lists FAQs and includes procedures such as endoscopic planter fasciotomy and heel spur removal. The website is sponsored and products can be purchased. Useful to patients and junior doctors.**