

## Prostate Enlargement and Qi Gong

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Some degree of benign prostate enlargement (BPH) occurs in 60% of men between the ages of 40-60, increasing to 90% by age 70. An imbalance in hormones may cause an overproduction of prostate cells resulting in BPH. Symptoms include swelling, difficulty (need to urinate but you can't), frequent/urgent urination, and dribbling urine. BPH should be diagnosed by your doctor to rule out more serious problems like infection or cancer. The typical treatments for BPH with western medicine include drugs that inhibit the hormones that control prostate growth or that relax the smooth muscles inside the prostate gland. If the prostate becomes too enlarged, surgery may be required. If the enlargement is not too severe, then there is an opportunity to try some complementary techniques to reduce the prostate growth

Limit beverages in the evening, limit alcohol and caffeine which increase urine production and irritate the bladder, limit unnecessary decongestant medications which make urination more difficult. Inactivity or being cold has also been shown to cause urine retention so keep moving and stay warm. ([www.mayoclinic.com](http://www.mayoclinic.com))

Traditional Chinese Medicine considers prostate problems to be related to too much dampness in the abdomen and weakness in the Kidney (especially Kidney yang) energy.

To reduce dampness in the body: exercise more, avoid too much raw, cold, sweet, or mucus-forming foods - meats, eggs, dairy products, fats such as lard and butter, fried foods, margarine, oils, oily foods such as nuts and seeds (especially peanuts), foods containing concentrated sweeteners, refined salt (table salt), excess salt of any kind, shellfish, and all pesticides (eat organic only- pesticides exacerbate prostate enlargement). Avoid too much fruit, avoid complex meals with too many different ingredients, late-night eating, and overeating. **Avoid ice cream and ice cream substitutes.**

Eat foods that dry dampness: rye, amaranth, corn, adzuki beans, celery, lettuce, pumpkin, scallion, alfalfa, turnip, kohlrabi, white pepper, raw honey, chamomile or pau d'arco tea, micro algae *dunaliella* and wild blue-green.

To help build the Kidney yang energy eat: cloves, fenugreek seeds, fennel seeds, anise seeds, black peppercorn, ginger (dried preferred), cinnamon bark, walnuts, black beans, onion family (garlic, onions, chives, scallions, leeks), quinoa, chicken, lamb, trout, and salmon, as well as parsley, wheat berry, and sweet rice for general Kidney energy. Avoid too much cooling foods and fruits, raw foods, and excessive salt. It is good to add a little seaweed into your diet with meals or as supplements to balance the warming action of building Kidney yang, but not too much if you are feeling cold.

Supplements to build Kidney energy: oyster shell, clam shell, and the following can be taken as herbal teas - rose hips, schisandra fruit, raspberry and blackberry leaves, gravel root.

**Lisa B. O'Shea Certified Qi Gong Therapist and Instructor**

Qi Gong Institute of Rochester 595 Blossom Rd. Ste. 307 Rochester, NY 14610

(585) 377-2044 Toll Free: (877) 346-4017 [www.Qigongrochester.com](http://www.Qigongrochester.com)

Supplements for enlarged prostate: Pygeum africanum extract (100-200 mg. daily for several months), saw palmetto (320 mg daily of a standardized 80-95% fatty acids), chaparral, gravel root, Hydrangea arborescens, Kombu/kelp (3 g./day or more-avoid if feel cold). Lightly roasted pumpkin seeds may be eaten daily for their essential fatty acid and zinc content (1-2 ounces daily), flax seed (ground, 3-4 Tbl. sp. daily). Please let your doctor know if you are using any supplements because they can affect certain tests such as the PSA screening test for prostate cancer.

The following Qi Gong meditation builds Kidney energy and improves the circulation around the prostate.

### **Kidney Energy Building Meditation**

Sit with your hands on your lap, palm down or facing your belly. Do not interlace your fingers, though. Your feet should be flat on the floor, knees at a 90 degree angle. Keep your back straight and relaxed. Shoulders should be relaxed and chin down slightly. The arch in your lower back should be flattened slightly as well. The teeth are together without clenching the jaw. Touch the tip of your tongue to the roof of your mouth unless you have high blood pressure. If you have high blood pressure, place the tip of your tongue behind your bottom teeth inside your mouth.

Put your mind on the Dantian energy center which is about 1 ½" below the belly button and centered inside the body. Breathe slowly and smoothly. Picture that the air goes all the way down to the Dantian. As you inhale, the belly expands, as you exhale the belly sinks back in naturally. Picture the coals of a fire glowing brightly deep in your belly. Imagine each breath you take is blowing on these coals making them brighter and warmer. Continue this meditation for as long as is comfortable. This meditation greatly enhances the Kidney energy but you can increase it even more by following this with an additional visualization that utilizes a powerful meridian point for the Kidney energy called the Hui Yin.

The Hui Yin meridian point is an energy point on the perineum, just below the surface of the skin between your legs, equidistant from the anus and the sexual organs. Focus your attention on this point until you imagine that it is glowing or warm. As you breathe in, imagine drawing up this point, the Hui Yin, all the way up until you see it touch the Dantian center in your belly. It is a slight physical drawing up as well as a mental drawing up. Picture the Hui Yin as a ball or point touching the Dantian. Once you see the point touch the Dantian, gently contract the muscles around your perineum/anus area. Do this in a very relaxed, gentle manner. A powerful contraction will only congest the energy more so keep it very gentle. Then relax all your muscles and exhale, returning the energy to the Hui Yin point between the legs. You may relax for several breaths before you begin the next upward drawing of the Hui Yin. It is very important to do this if you feel light-headed in any way. The change in breathing pattern caused by this exercise can cause hyperventilation and you should be cautious and return to normal breathing before this becomes a problem. Repeat this up to 20 times in one sitting. To finish the meditation, return all of your attention back to the Dantian for a few moments. Repeat the exercise several times a day.

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