



ask the DOCTOR

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PROSTATE CANCER



Shared Decision Making

Shared Decision Making Defined

Shared decision making is a process in which patients and healthcare providers decide **together** the best plan of care based on the patient's values and goals. This approach involves clinicians and patients sharing the best available evidence, and patients are supported and encouraged to consider all options, with the goal of making the most informed decisions possible.

Successful shared decision making is interactive, occurs in real-time, includes a mutual sharing of information, and allows time for understanding and weighing options. Sometimes, when appropriate, key family members may also be present and included in the discussions.

Why Shared Decision Making?

Shared decision making must be built on the core skills of good communication and can lead to patients:

- Learning more about the disease and treatment options
- Being more active in their healthcare decisions
- Choosing more conservative treatment options
- Improving health outcomes
- Staying on treatment longer

Resources aimed at improving shared decision making may include patient portals, decision tools, decision support toolkits, videos, guides, and more.



Ideally, shared decision making occurs in a step-by-step process. A treatment decision is based on many factors, but the provider must:

- Ask for patient input
- Provide an unbiased list of options, including pros and cons
- Understand the patient's values and preferences
- Decide, with the patient, on the best choice
- Continue open communication with the patient to determine if the best decision was made

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