



# Understanding Your PSA Monitoring Journey

A comprehensive guide to your long-term post-prostatectomy care and what your PSA levels mean for your health eight years after surgery.

# Your Current PSA Status: What the Numbers Tell Us

Your recent PSA readings have remained stable in a reassuring range. The November test showed 0.18, while previous readings were 0.13 and 0.15. These numbers indicate that your PSA is hovering just above 0.1 but importantly, **not moving quickly**.

Eight years out from your prostatectomy surgery, this stability is exactly what we want to see. The ultrasensitive PSA test measures one decimal point more precisely than standard tests, which is why we can track these small variations. However, the clinical definition of PSA failure starts at 0.2, and you're comfortably below that threshold.

0.18

Current PSA

November reading

0.2

Concern Threshold

PSA failure definition

8

Years Post-Surgery

Long-term stability

# Understanding Ultrasensitive vs. Regular PSA Testing



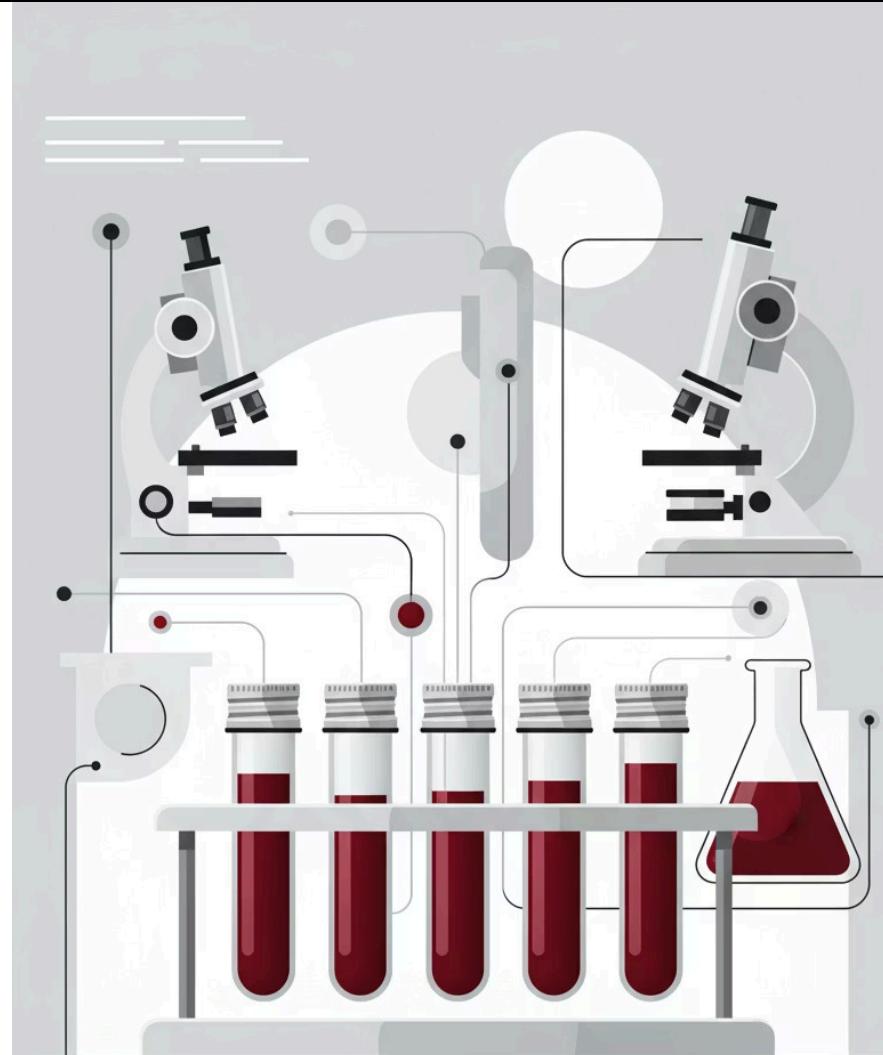
## Ultrasensitive PSA

Measures PSA with one additional decimal point of precision, detecting levels as low as 0.01. Once we start using this test, we continue with it to compare apples to apples and maintain consistency in your monitoring.



## Regular PSA

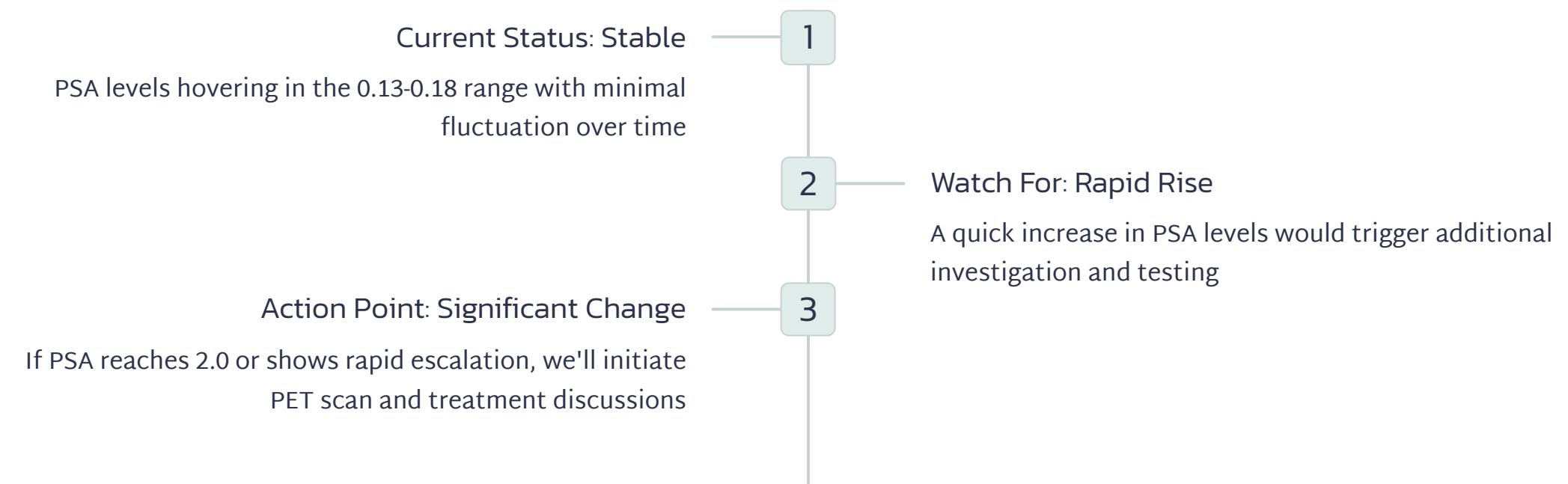
Standard test used for most patients. In general, one could argue we don't need the ultrasensitive version, but since your monitoring began with it, we'll maintain that approach for consistent tracking over time.



MODERN DIAGNOSTICS

# What We're Really Watching For

At this stage of your recovery, we're not concerned about the specific number as much as we are monitoring the **rate of change**. Your PSA levels have remained remarkably stable, which is the best indicator of long-term success.



# The Role of PET Scans in Your Care



## Not Needed Right Now

A PET scan is a powerful diagnostic tool, but at your current PSA levels, **it won't show anything meaningful**. PET scans become valuable when PSA levels rise significantly, as they can detect signals outside the prostate area.

If your PSA reaches concerning levels or shows rapid increase, a PET scan will help us:

- Identify any signals outside the prostate
- Determine if intervention is needed
- Guide treatment decisions including hormone therapy

## Your Monitoring Schedule Going Forward

01

### Every Six Months

Schedule your PSA testing twice yearly. This frequency gives us adequate data points to track trends without over-testing. Dr. Saram's office will provide lab orders for the ultrasensitive PSA test to maintain consistency.

02

### Review Results

After each test, results will be shared with both Dr. Saram's office and Dr. Merck, your primary care physician. This ensures your entire care team stays informed about your prostate health status.

03

### Watch for Changes

If there's any significant change in your PSA levels or rate of rise, contact the office immediately to discuss next steps, which may include more frequent testing or imaging.

# When to Be Concerned: Clear Thresholds

It's important to understand what numbers actually warrant concern versus normal fluctuation. Right now, you're in an excellent position, and here's what would change that assessment:

## PSA Reaches 2.0 or Higher

This is the level that gets our attention and triggers additional investigation. You're currently at 0.18, which means you have considerable margin before reaching this threshold.

## Rapid Rate of Increase

A sudden jump in PSA levels over a short period, even if below 2.0, would prompt us to take a closer look and potentially order imaging studies.

## Consistent Upward Trend

While minor fluctuations are normal, a persistent pattern of increasing values over multiple tests would merit discussion about next steps.



# Coordinating Care with Dr. Merck

## Your Primary Care Partnership

Continuing your relationship with Dr. Merck is an important part of your comprehensive care. Your PSA results are being shared with his office, ensuring everyone on your healthcare team has the complete picture.

Remember to complete those lab orders when you can—we know how it goes for busy patients! When you do see Dr. Merck in the spring, he'll have all your recent PSA data to review alongside your other health metrics.



### Communication Between Providers

Dr. Saram's office automatically forwards your PSA results to Dr. Merck, so both physicians can monitor your progress and coordinate any needed interventions. This integrated approach ensures nothing falls through the cracks.



## Eight Years Strong: Your Success Story

Being eight years post-prostatectomy with stable PSA levels is a significant milestone worth celebrating. Your consistent monitoring and stable results indicate that your surgery was successful and your long-term prognosis remains excellent.

### Stable PSA Range

Your numbers consistently fall between 0.13-0.18, showing no concerning upward trends or rapid increases.

### Well Below Thresholds

At 0.18, you're comfortably under the 0.2 failure definition and far from the 2.0 concern level.

### Long-Term Perspective

Eight years of successful outcomes give you and your care team confidence in your continued health trajectory.

## Your Action Plan: Simple and Clear



### Schedule Your Next Appointment

Make an appointment for six months from now. The office will provide lab orders for your ultrasensitive PSA test, which should be done a week or two before your follow-up visit.



### Continue Your Routine

No changes needed to your current lifestyle or medications. Your stable PSA levels indicate you're doing everything right—just keep doing what you're doing.



### Stay Informed, Not Worried

Understanding your numbers is important, but remember: you're in an excellent position. Small fluctuations in the 0.1-0.2 range are normal and not cause for concern. Focus on living well, and we'll keep monitoring the data.

Questions between now and your next visit? Don't hesitate to reach out to Dr. Saram's office. Your healthcare team is here to support you every step of the way.