

# Unnecessary Imaging for Prostate Cancer

Many men with low-risk prostate cancer continue to undergo unnecessary imaging tests, such as CT scans, to stage their disease, even after guidelines were introduced to stem the trend. VA researchers studied whether rates of inappropriate (“guideline-discordant”) imaging differed between VA and Medicare settings.

Rates of **guideline-discordant imaging** among men with **low-risk** prostate cancer, based on health care setting where care was received:

Medicare only

**52.5%**

VA and Medicare

**50.9%**

VA only

**45.9%**

**Conclusion:** “The results of this study suggest that patients with prostate cancer who use Medicare rather than the VA for health care could experience more utilization of health care services without an improvement in the quality of care.”

Based on a study of nearly 99,000 U.S. men with a diagnosis of prostate cancer. From [“Association Between Guideline-Discordant Prostate Cancer Imaging Rates and Health Care Service Among Veterans and Medicare Recipients,” JAMA Network Open](#), Aug. 17, 2018. Infographic by VA Research Communications, October 2018. Photo: © iStock/skynesher.