Box 1

Prostatitis symptoms

NIH category I: Acute bacterial prostatitis

- Acute onset pain which may or may not be related to voiding. This pain may be located within the pelvic region including specifically the prostate, perineum, urethra, penis, testes, groin and lower back
- Lower urinary tract symptoms which may be subclassified as storage (urgency, frequency, nocturia, dysuria) and voiding (hesitancy, poor stream, straining). Patients may also report haematuria or haematospermia
- Systemic symptoms: fever, rigors, nausea, vomiting and septicaemia

NIH category II: Chronic bacterial prostatitis

- A documented history of recurrent urinary tract infections is the key feature
- Previous acute prostatitis predisposes approximately 10% of men to chronic bacterial prostatitis
- Patients may report acute or chronic episodes of pain (as described above)
- Patients may complain of systemic symptoms associated with the episodes of pain
- Duration of symptoms > three months defines chronicity

NIH category IIIA and IIIB: Chronic pelvic pain syndrome

- Clinically, inflammatory and non-inflammatory chronic pelvic pain syndrome symptoms may be identical. Duration of symptoms > three months defines chronicity
- The key symptom is pain, as described above. Patients may describe pain during or after ejaculation as their predominant symptom[13]
- Sexual dysfunction including erectile dysfunction, ejaculatory dysfunction and decreased libido may also be reported
- These patients are likely to describe a significantly diminished quality of life at presentation. They may display features of psychological distress: stress, anxiety, depression, diminished quality of life[14]

NIH category IV: Asymptomatic inflammatory prostatitis

- These patients by definition do not present with symptoms but have a pathological diagnosis of prostatitis made during investigation or management of other urological conditions (at transurethral resection of the prostate or prostate biopsy)