MEDICARE COVERAGE MAKES CRYOTHERAPY AN AFFORDABLE OPTION

Cryotherapy is covered by Medicare as a primary treatment for localized prostate cancer. It’s also often covered for prostate cancer that returns after any type of radiation treatment.

The benefits of the procedure include:

• a choice of general or local anesthesia.
• no radiation beam exposure.
• no permanent radiation seeds.
• unlike radical prostatectomy, cryotherapy is not major surgery.
• typically fast and easy recovery with low risk of potential side effects (other than impotence).²

INTRODUCTION TO CRYOTHERAPY

If you or a loved one have been diagnosed with prostate cancer, this can be a difficult and confusing time. You could probably use some good news right now.

Fortunately, there’s a prostate cancer treatment you may not have heard about called cryotherapy, which is a minimally invasive procedure that uses ice to destroy prostate cancer.

Cryotherapy does not involve radiation or radioactive seeds that are left in the body. And unlike radical prostatectomy, cryotherapy is not major surgery. That means patients are typically back on their feet quickly. And published studies have demonstrated good long-term outcomes from doctors who perform the cryotherapy procedure.¹

In this decision guide, you will read about the procedure, discover the latest information about the long-term data and determine if you may be a candidate for cryotherapy.

HERE’S HOW CRYOTHERAPY ELIMINATES THE CANCER

With cryotherapy, the physician inserts 6-8 slender probes into the prostate gland. Circulated within each probe is argon gas, which results in temperatures cold enough to freeze the entire prostate including any cancer cells. A warming catheter protects the urethra from the very cold temperatures. Ultrasound images allow your doctor to guide the probes to the best possible positions for destroying the cancer. Temperature sensors carefully monitor the process and precisely determine when target temperatures have been reached.

THERE IS EXTENSIVE CRYOTHERAPY CLINICAL DATA

Today, published studies help document the clinical value of cryotherapy as a treatment for prostate cancer. And recent 10 year data provides evidence of cryotherapy’s long-term durability.³ Together this clinical data, along with the outcomes from thousands of patients, makes cryotherapy a viable treatment option for patients with primary prostate cancer and for prostate cancer that returns after any type of radiation.

DETERMINING IF YOU’RE A CANDIDATE FOR CRYOTHERAPY

Whether you have first-time or recurrent prostate cancer, there’s a good chance you’re eligible for cryotherapy as long as your cancer has not spread beyond the prostate. Of course, only a qualified doctor will know for sure.

SIDE EFFECTS

As with any treatment for prostate cancer, side effects may occur after cryotherapy. These side effects may include loss of urinary control, injury to the rectum, and loss of sexual function.

Incontinence occurred in no more than 8% of patients.¹ Injury to the rectum occurred in less than 0.5% of patients.¹ Rates of impotence varied from 49% to 93% at 1 year after cryotherapy.¹

Other side effects may include temporary swelling, soreness, or discomfort in or around the scrotum or penis for a few days following the procedure. Talk to your doctor about what you can do to help relieve any swelling or soreness. You should also talk to your doctor about the possibility of seeing blood in your urine and what you should do if you see it.

Be sure to speak with a qualified urologist to learn more about the benefits and risks that cryotherapy may hold for you.
"I AM A GENERAL SURGEON. I DID NOT WANT RADIATION THERAPY…"

"THE REASON I CHOSE CRYOTHERAPY IS BECAUSE I FELT THAT IT WAS AS GOOD OR POSSIBLY EVEN BETTER THAN ANY OTHER THERAPY THAT I HAD RESEARCHED WITHOUT MANY OF THE TROUBLESOME SIDE EFFECTS. I FEEL CONFIDENT THAT I AM CURED AND WILL LIVE MY NORMAL LIFE EXPECTANCY."

– Richard Vanderhoof, MD
Retired General Surgeon

"WE CAN ENJOY LIFE AND DO THE THINGS WE’VE ALWAYS DONE TOGETHER. HE’S HEALTHY AND HAPPY…AND THAT, TO ME, IS THE MOST IMPORTANT THING."

– Mrs. Richard Vanderhoof


2. Ellis DS. Cryosurgery as a Primary Treatment for Localized Prostate Cancer: A Community Hospital Experience. Urology 2002; 60:34-39.


Disclaimer: This decision guide is not a substitute for medical advice. Cryotherapy is a medical procedure that involves certain inherent risks. Please consult your physician for more information.