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Targeted Freezing Technique Increases Cure Rates/Life Quality in Men With Prostate Cancer



CHICAGO, Dec. 5, 2014 /PRNewswire/ -- A new 10-year study on men with prostate cancer has shown that those who underwent a procedure to treat their tumors by just freezing them (no surgery, radiation or chemotherapy) had a higher cure rate than those who undergo conventional prostate gland removal (radical prostatectomy).

The technique, called focal cryoablation, was developed by Ft. Lauderdale, Florida-based Gary M. Onik, M.D. adjunct professor of mechanical engineering at Carnegie Mellon University, who presented his findings at the annual meeting of the Radiological Society of North America on December 4, 2014.

"If confirmed by others and applied widely, focal cryoablation could result in a substantial decrease in prostate cancer-related deaths while offering a better post-surgical quality of life," said Dr. Onik.

Dr. Onik's study included 75 men who underwent his cryoablation procedure and were followed on average for 10 years. He noted that the long-term aspect of the study allows his results to finally be compared to other more traditional treatments.

Focal cryoablation, sometimes referred to as the "male lumpectomy," is similar to lumpectomy for breast cancer, in that it employs imaging technology such as ultrasound to guide and precisely target a specially designed destructive probe into a tumor.

"This probe freezes the tumor, causing the tumor to die without destroying the surrounding tissue," Dr. Onik explained. "The treated tumor, left inside the body, acts like a cancer vaccine, using the patient's natural defense mechanisms to prevent tumor recurrence in distant parts of the body (known as metastasis)."

At the end of Dr. Onik's study, none of the men had died from prostate cancer, and 90% of patients at high risk for cancer recurrence were disease-free. This compares to 50% for high-risk patients who undergo radical prostatectomy, according to previously published studies. None of Dr. Onik's study participants were incontinent, compared to 16% for those who undergo robotic radical prostatectomy. Potency was 94% in his study vs. 70% for robotic radical prostatectomy based on recently published data.

"These statistics are not only much better than those for conventional treatments, but in the highest risk patients, the death rate could potentially be reduced by 75% using this method," noted Dr. Onik. "Improvement in quality of life in terms of potency and continence is significant as well."

"Focal cryoablation has been used for quite some time in the U.S. and around the world, but until now there's been no long-term data," Dr Onik continued. "My study provides data that make it clear, beyond a doubt, that focal cryotherapy could save lives and is an effective treatment for prostate cancer."

For more information about focal cryoablation, contact Dr. Onik at 321-297-4489 or visit his website at: www.prostatecancer2.com. (<http://www.prostatecancer2.com/>)

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