

Treat prostate problems with gentle heat



At Your Service Urology

Ramon Perez, MD

“One of the most common health problems men experience as they age is enlargement of the prostate gland, a condition known as benign prostatic hyperplasia, or BPH,” says Ramon Perez, MD, of At Your Service Urology.

“Enlargement of the prostate occurs in most men as they age,” notes the doctor. “In fact, men over the age of 50 typically have the condition to some degree, and if we live long enough, we will almost certainly develop it. BPH often produces chronic symptoms that have a significant impact on the quality of life.”

Symptoms that may indicate

BPH

- Frequent urination, especially during the night
- Weak urine flow
- Feeling like bladder is not empty after urination
- Stopping and starting again while urinating
- Difficulty stopping urine flow

The prostate gland surrounds the urethra, the thin canal that carries urine out of the body from the bladder. As a man ages and his prostate enlarges, it begins to press against the urethra, narrowing the passageway and forcing the bladder to work harder to push urine through the smaller opening.

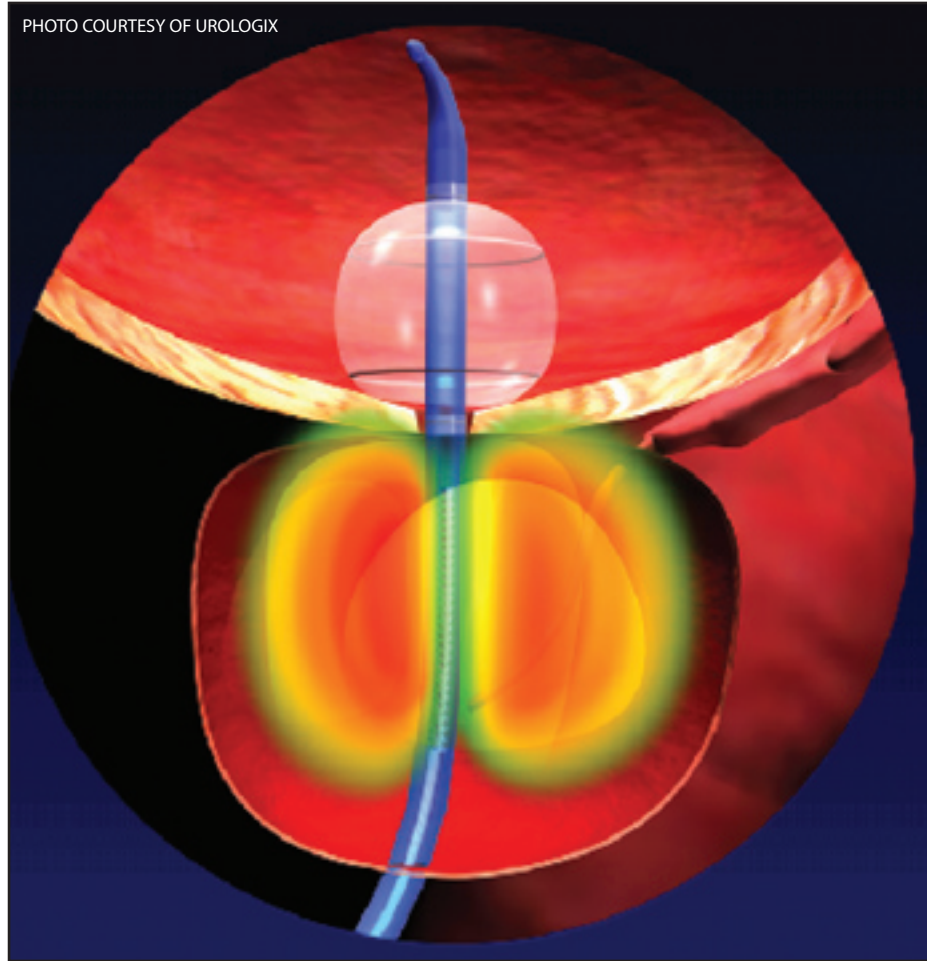
The bladder muscle also thickens, making it contract even when there are only small amounts of urine present. This causes more frequent trips to the bathroom, even during the night while trying to sleep, and can produce a sense of urgency that gives the sufferer a serious concern about being too far from facilities at any time.

“BPH impacts quality of life significantly,” adds Dr. Perez, “and treating it can improve not only urination but also other significant quality of life factors, including sexual function, sleep, and level of energy.”

Standard treatments

“There are three typical approaches to BPH,” explains Dr. Perez: “prescription medication, minimally invasive procedures, and invasive surgery.”

Surgery is an option few men wish to pursue, and for good reason. The surgical procedure to treat BPH — transurethral resection of the prostate (TURP) — can lead to such postsurgical complications as urinary incontinence, erectile dysfunction, and ejaculation problems. Worse, the procedure frequently proves effective only on a temporary basis so that more surgery is



Cooled thermotherapy can help men suffering from an enlarged prostate avoid surgery and can eliminate the need for expensive BPH medications.

required within just a few years.

“There are also various forms of laser surgery,” adds Dr. Perez, “but, like TURP, they require hospitalization, and long-term studies of their efficacy have been inconclusive.”

Medication might seem a much better option, but that, too, has serious limitations.

“There are so many medications for the prostate,” observes Dr. Perez, “but they cost quite a bit of money on an ongoing basis. Alpha blocker drugs like Cardura and Flomax or 5-alpha-reductase inhibitors like Proscar and Avodart often provide relief from BPH symptoms in the short term, but their effectiveness may decrease over time.

“In addition, BPH medications cause unwanted side effects for many men. These include dizziness, low blood pressure, loss of sex drive, and erectile dysfunction.”

A better solution

At Your Service Urology is a new urologic practice established with the explicit mandate of providing the latest state-of-the-art technologies in an environment that is conducive to patient comfort. Fortunately, At Your Service Urology can resolve the irritating problems associated with BPH with a simple, comfortable in-office procedure.

Cooled thermotherapy is a class of heat treatment that uses proprietary cooled microwave technology to treat BPH. This procedure has been widely recognized as a highly effective outpatient treatment for BPH.

“Cooled thermotherapy is not a surgical procedure,” assures Dr. Perez. “It is a minimally invasive office-based procedure that enables sufferers to say goodbye to the long-term use of BPH medications.”

The treatment delivers precisely targeted microwave energy to heat and destroy enlarged prostate tissue, while

a unique cooling system protects the surrounding healthy tissue.

Therapy is delivered through a treatment catheter inserted into the urethra and held in place with a balloon, which inflates in the bladder. An antenna within the catheter delivers a controlled dose of microwave energy. The heating is relatively low at the urethral surface, increases in temperature rapidly within the prostate, and then decreases toward the perimeter surface of the gland.

Simultaneously, cooled water is circulated through outer channels in the treatment catheter, allowing for a deeper penetration of heat in the prostate gland, drawing heat away from the delicate surface of the urethra and protecting it from damage.

“Cooling the urethra reduces the need for anesthesia and provides a more rapid recovery,” explains Dr. Perez. “It also allows more heat to be used to remove

diseased tissue, providing long-lasting reduction in the symptoms associated with BPH.

“This is a very comfortable procedure, and treatments are usually approximately an hour in length. Patients are under minimal sedation,” emphasizes the doctor, “so they are nice and relaxed in a comfortable environment and listening to their favorite music.”

The treatment is simple, safe, and effective, and it is also a cost-effective procedure, especially when compared with drugs or surgery.

“Most symptom-relieving medications must be taken daily and may cost the patient thousands of dollars each year,” says Perez. “Invasive surgery is also notably more expensive than this treatment.”

Numerous clinical studies in the United States and Europe, including several that followed patients for more than five years, have shown that cooled thermotherapy treatments produce significant improvements in BPH symptoms and urine flow, are not associated with any major complications, preserve sexual function, and maintain long-term relief.

Cooled thermotherapy has been an FDA-approved treatment since 1996, but multiple upgrades to the equipment make it an ever more attractive option.

“The cooled thermotherapy machines from Urologix, Inc., have been proven to be more comfortable and effective than other machines on the market,” notes Dr. Perez. “And now Urologix has developed an even better, faster machine, which we use in our practice. It has just recently been released, and comparing it with the previous version is like comparing high-definition TV to regular TV. There are a number of other systems available for this therapy, but I believe the Urologix system to be the best.

“For anyone who is tired of taking BPH medications for his prostate, is weary of paying for those medications, or is worried about side effects from BPH medications, this is an excellent alternative. I highly recommend anyone seeking relief from BPH to take a look at cooled thermotherapy and see if it can help them as it has helped so many others.” **FHCN**—Michael J. Sabino



Ramon Perez, MD, is a diplomate of the American Board of Urology, fellow of the American College of Surgeons, and fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons in Canada. He graduated summa cum laude from the University of Puerto Rico School of Medicine in 1974. After his internship in surgery at Rochester General Hospital, New York, Dr. Perez completed his urological residency at the University of Toronto in 1980. From 1986 to 1992, he was associate professor of urology and pediatrics at Queens University, Kingston, Ontario. Currently he is president of the Tampa Bay Urological Society and medical director of Criterion Research.

State-of-the-art urology in a caring environment

At Your Service Urology offers the latest technology in an environment conducive to patient comfort. For more information, or to schedule a consultation appointment, please call (727) 372-7014. The office is located at 1822 Wellness Ln. in Trinity.