

Treatment

You may be given a general anaesthetic so that you are unconscious during the treatment or you may have an injection into your spine (an epidural) so that you are awake but unable to feel anything in your lower body. It is important that you lie still during the operation, so you may be sedated (made drowsy) if you have an epidural.

Your surgeon will insert a probe into your back passage (rectum). This probe gives out a series of high intensity ultrasound beams, which are focused on an area of the prostate gland. The probe is surrounded by a cooling balloon, to protect your back passage from the high temperatures. It takes between two to three hours to treat the whole prostate gland.

Some surgeons use HIFU to only treat the areas of the prostate gland where cancer is present. This is called focal therapy. This is currently only available as part of a clinical trial. The trial aims to find out whether treating part of the prostate gland is as effective as treating the whole gland and whether it causes fewer side effects. If you have focal therapy (see the section on advantages of HIFU for an explanation of this) then treatment lasts between 30 minutes to 1 ½ hours.

Going home after treatment

You will be able to go home once you have recovered from the anaesthetic, you are feeling comfortable and you have been shown how to look after your catheter. This will usually be on the day of your HIFU treatment. Your doctor will check that you are fit to go home and you have someone to look after you. Your specialist team will give you antibiotics and painkillers to take at home. You will also have an appointment to return to the hospital to have your catheter removed.

You may notice blood in your urine while your catheter is in place. You may also notice some small pieces of tissue in your urine for up to two months after your HIFU treatment. Some bleeding and pieces of tissue in the urine are quite normal, however contact your doctor if you are worried or develop any new symptoms such as pain or a temperature.

What happens afterwards?

After your HIFU treatment you will have regular appointments with your specialist team to check your PSA level and monitor any side effects, such as problems passing urine and erection problems.

Your PSA level should reach its lowest level three to four months after your treatment. Your PSA should fall to less than 0.5ng/ml. If your PSA does not fall to this level or if it starts to rise again, you may need to have a biopsy to see if cancer cells are present in the prostate gland.

If prostate cancer cells are present, your specialist team may offer you further treatment. This is sometimes called 'salvage' treatment. Treatment options may include:

- Repeat HIFU therapy
- Radical prostatectomy
- External beam radiotherapy
- Cryotherapy
- Hormone therapy

What are the side effects?

The most common side effects are described here but there is no way of knowing which of these you will get, or how bad they will be. Ask your specialist team for more information on the risk of side effects. They should be willing to show you the results of the treatments which they have carried out and put you in touch with other men who have had the treatment.

Urinary problems

HIFU can cause problems passing urine. However, you are less likely to get the side effects described below if you have had a TURP operation before having HIFU.

Between 10 per cent and 50 per cent of men treated with HIFU will get a urine infection after treatment. If this happens to you, your doctor will prescribe you a course of antibiotics to clear the infection.

Questions to ask your specialist team

- Will I need a TURP before my HIFU treatment?
- Will I need hormone therapy before my HIFU treatment?
- What are the chances of short term and/or long term side effects with this treatment?
- How will I know if the treatment has worked?
- What should my PSA level be after treatment and when will you be checking it again?
- If my PSA continues to rise, what other treatments are available?

Notes

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More information

The Prostate Cancer Charity

This fact sheet is part of the Tool Kit. Call our confidential Helpline on 0800 074 8383 or visit our website at www.prostate-cancer.org.uk for more Tool Kit fact sheets including an **A to Z of medical words**, which explains some of the words and phrases used in this sheet.

Bladder and Bowel Foundation

www.bladderandbowelfoundation.org
Helpline 0845 345 0165
(Mon - Fri, 9.30am - 1pm)
SATRA Innovation Park, Rockingham Road,
Kettering, Northants NN16 9JH
For support and information on continence problems.

National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE)

www.nice.org.uk
Order line 0845 003 7783
NICE produces recommendations on whether a treatment is suitable for use in the NHS. Visit their website or phone their order line for information on HIFU (booklet number N0840).

The Sexual Dysfunction Association

www.sexualdysfunctionassociation.com
Helpline: 0870 774 3571
Suite 301, Emblem House, 27 Tooley Street,
London SE1 2PR
Provides information on treatments for erectile dysfunction (impotence).

The Prostate Cancer Charity makes every effort to make sure that its services provide up-to-date, unbiased and accurate facts about prostate cancer. We hope that these will add to the medical advice you have already been given and will help you to make any decisions you may face. Please do continue to talk to your doctor if you are worried about any medical issues.

The Prostate Cancer Charity funds research into the causes of, and treatments for, prostate cancer. We also provide support and information to anyone concerned about prostate cancer. We rely on charitable donations to continue this work. If you would like to make a donation, please call us on 020 8222 7666.

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Website: www.prostate-cancer.org.uk

	<p>Free and confidential Helpline 0800 074 8383* Mon - Fri 10am - 4pm, Wed 7pm - 9pm</p>
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Email: helpline@prostate-cancer.org.uk

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*Calls are free of charge from UK landlines. Mobile phone charges may vary. Calls may be monitored for training purposes. Confidentiality is maintained between callers and The Prostate Cancer Charity.

A charity registered in England and Wales(1005541) and in Scotland (SCO39332)

References to sources of information used in the production of this fact sheet are available on our website.

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