



John Davies, Consultant Urological Surgeon

Cryoablation treatment for prostate cancer – The big freeze!

JH Davies, Consultant Urological Surgeon at The Royal Surrey County Hospital and St Lukes Cancer Centre, Guildford, explains the history of Cryosurgery and why RSCH has become a centre of excellence for the procedure the UK

The use of ice in medicine is not a new concept. Ice vapour was used to treat some forms of breast cancer as early as the 19th century. At temperatures of less than 0C, ice crystals form within living tissue. This causes the disruption of the cell wall and release of toxic materials causing “cell shock” and finally death of the cell. Cancer cells are killed if the temperature is taken to below -40C.

Later, in the 1960’s, liquid nitrogen was used to freeze the prostate gland in men with advanced prostate cancer. However, although able to freeze tissue to below -100C, the use of liquid nitrogen did not gain acceptance in urological practice due to the severe complications caused by the lack of control of temperature and the inability to monitor the freeze process.

It wasn’t until the 1990s that the use of specially designed temperature needles and accurate visualisation of the prostate during treatment by trans-rectal ultrasound enabled safer freezing of the prostate. Liquid argon is colder than nitrogen allowing temperatures within the prostate to be taken to -140C and

peripheral temperatures to -40C. Cryoprobes needles 2 mms in diameter allow argon gas to circulate and freeze the prostate. Helium gas is then pumped into the cryoprobe allowing rapid thawing and a safer control of the prostate.

The use of such technology allows men with either prostate cancer localised to the gland or men who have received radiotherapy for prostate cancer which recurs, to receive cryoablation in a minimally invasive manner, often as a day case procedure. Results indicate this treatment can be as effective as radiotherapy, brachytherapy and radical surgery in curing prostate cancer localised to the gland. In those men who have recurrent prostate cancer post radiation it offers a chance of a cure instead of palliative hormonal therapy or a major salvage operation.

The Royal Surrey County Hospital was the first hospital in Europe to offer argon/helium technology for prostate cancer treatment. The cryo programme started in 1999 with a visit by John Davies to Columbia Presbyterian Hospital in New York. Subsequently, a team of American Surgeons including Professor Douglas

Chinn, visited Guildford to help launch the programme. This work was supported by the Prostate Project who provided the vital ultrasound facility for cryo and also supported the purchase of the delicate finely engineered cryoprobes for some local patients.

The use of cryosurgery for prostate cancer allows a minimally invasive treatment to be used which can be repeated if necessary, unlike radiotherapy or radical surgery. A typical patient may be admitted on the day of the operation which can be carried out under a local or general anaesthetic. Men can be discharged the same day or the following morning.

To date, 58 men have been treated in Guildford using cryoablation. The majority have received previous radiotherapy which has failed. However, men have also been treated who elected not to undergo radiotherapy treatments or major surgery.

The NHS, via the National Institute of Clinical Excellence (NICE), is currently evaluating cryoablation. Three other centres in the UK have commenced such treatments.

Patient Support Helpline

If you would like to talk to someone from our patient support group, please call either Mac Derwig on 01483 811878 (mobile 07971 855195) or Peter Smale on 01252 714807. All calls are strictly confidential.

Alliss Golf Day raises a record £15,000

24 teams of 4 battled it out over 18 holes at Hindhead Golf club on September 19 for the honour of becoming Prostate Project Champions of 2003. Blessed with glorious weather, the day was a huge success raising £15,000 - nearly twice last year’s figure. Many thanks to all those who participated, to Jackie Alliss for organising it all and of course her husband, Peter Alliss, for another highly entertaining auction and prizegiving.



Left: John Davies with Mike Jordan (nearest the pin winner) and Peter Alliss.

State of the art Ligasure machine speeds up prostate and pelvic cancer surgery



Sister Jay Tesoro with the new Ligasure machine at Frimley Park Hospital

Coagulating and sealing blood vessels is vital to many surgical procedures. Conventionally, this happens either by tying the vessel or by the point of a very hot instrument which can, in certain cases, cause distant damage.

This new machine, recently donated by the Prostate

Project, is a state-of-the-art diathermy machine. Diathermy means “through heat” and the machine coagulates and seals blood vessels by heating them to very high temperatures and effectively cooking them.

It allows the current to pass only between the blades of

the instrument thereby reducing the risk of distant damage. Surgeons at Frimley and Guildford are delighted with the results and are confident it will allow operations to be completed more rapidly, thereby minimising blood loss and the need for transfusions.



Left: Mike Collett, PP Trustee, Colin Stokes, PP Chairman, Wahid Hosanee, Charge Nurse, Tony Connor, PP Committee, John Davies, Consultant Urological Surgeon, Michele Pietrasik, Specialist Urology Nurse.

Making a real difference to the way our urology clinic functions

Colin Stokes walked into my clinic with symptoms of prostate cancer in May 1997. Little did I realise then what a significant consultation it would turn out to be. I completed a radical prostatectomy for Colin 3 weeks later and am very happy to report that today he is fit and active and continues to head up our wonderfully successful charity.

The Prostate Project has made a very significant difference to our ability to treat patients in the Urology Clinic. RSCH is now recognised as one of the benchmark hospitals for prostate cancer care in the UK and I can confidently say that without the support of the Prostate Project, this would not have been achieved.

The most important tangible benefit is that we are able to treat more men now – 40% more than 4 years ago, largely due to The Prostate Project directly funding a specialist Urology nurse and purchasing a large amount of new equipment to aid both treatment and training.

Not only are more men being treated but they are likely to have a better cure rate, simply because more are seeing their doctor as soon as they notice symptoms.

On a personal note, I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has donated money to us, no matter how small the amount. You have made a real difference to the quality of care we are able to provide.

John Davies

Prostate Project raises £520,000 in 4 years

“Beyond our wildest dreams” says chairman and founder Colin Stokes

When we started our charity in June 2000, we set ourselves a target of raising £250,000 in 5 years. At the time of going to press we have raised £520,000 in just over 4 years! That is a fantastic effort and I want to publicly say a huge ‘thank you’ not just to our very supportive and committed group of Trustees, Patrons and committee members but also to everyone who has given so generously to our very worthwhile cause.

100% of the money you have donated is committed to or spent on essential projects within the Urology Departments of the Royal Surrey County Hospital, St Luke’s Cancer Centre and Frimley Park Hospital. A complete list of everything we have donated or funded is shown on page 3 of this newsletter and I think you will agree, it’s a list to be proud of.

Importantly, we are a ‘golden pound’ charity which means we have no paid fund raisers and rely entirely on our own efforts and those of many volunteers. Every pound we receive flows straight to the point of need.

Although we are all delighted at this performance we all know there is much still

to be done. Prostate cancer does have a much higher profile than 4 years ago but it still lags behind the other better known cancers both in terms of awareness and funding. Crucially, we must maintain the flow of funds into our charity so that we can continue our fight to save death occurring from prostate cancer.

We are committed to ongoing salary support for specialist nursing staff and many new equipment purchases. We are expanding our awareness programme designed to encourage men to consult their GP at the first sign of symptoms and we are continuing to stress the importance of all men over 50 having their PSA level checked.

What I am really saying is please don’t stop donating to us. We need you just as much now as we did 4 years ago. We have exciting plans for 2004 and beyond but we can’t complete them without your continued generous help.

So much done, but so much still to do.

Colin Stokes
Chairman



Mac Derwig joins our Patient Support Group as Chairman

“I want to appeal to men’s wives!” says Mac, “they are often the prime movers in getting husbands with symptoms of prostate problems to see their GP”.

We are very pleased to welcome Mac Derwig as our new Chairman of the Project’s patient support group. Mac had a long and successful career with Unilever before retiring in 2000. He hopes to broaden the group’s activities to include RSCH and St Lukes Cancer Centre.

The Support group was founded at Frimley Park Hospital and is still most active in the Frimley area. Mac was diagnosed with prostate cancer in 2002 and underwent a radical prostatectomy in the same year. He is particularly keen that

we encourage younger generation men and their wives to become involved in spreading the vitally important awareness message. As Mac says “It is often wives who convince their husbands to make that all important first call to see their doctor”.

Our new patient helpline is now open so please don’t hesitate to call Mac on 01483 811878 (mobile 07971 855195) or Peter Smale on 01252 714807 if you would like to talk confidentially about prostate cancer.



Shwan Ahmed

Generous donations fund an important 3 year prostate cancer research project at Surrey University

Thanks to the generosity of an anonymous donor, we are very pleased to announce the commencement of a 3 year prostate cancer research project at Surrey University.

We have recently appointed Shwan Ahmed, who has just finished working at St George's Hospital, Tooting, as our first prostate cancer research fellow. Shwan, who started work on October 6, will register at the University of Surrey for an MD. The project will start with

him assessing cryosurgical treatment for prostate cancer to date and the assessment of all new referrals. In addition he will work with Professor Douglas Chinn (A world leading authority on Cryosurgery) to assess methods of temperature monitoring, safety issues, cryobiology and ideal treatment plans.

We also have an immunology study planned to assess whether cryosurgery can increase a patients immunity to prostate cancer.



Left: Sue Lewis, Deputy Chief Executive, RSCH, Anne Stokoe, Facilities Manager, Urology Dept. RSCH, Roger Frais, Managing Director, Cariat Technologies Ltd, Tim Sharp (Trustee, The Prostate Project)

Another major donation to Royal Surrey Urology Dept

Through the generosity of Cariat Technologies Ltd, we have been able to donate a state of the art Cryosurgery system to the Urology department at RSCH. This brings the total value of equipment donated by the charity to £120,000 in the last 12 months alone. Other items includes a BK Medical Hawk ultrasound scanner and a theatre camera and video link system which is used for training purposes. The video system was largely funded by a donation of £15,000 to the Prostate Project from The Foyle Foundation.

10 minute PSA tests coming soon

We are in the process of qualifying a '10 minute' PSA test machine, one of the first to be installed in the country. This will speed up diagnosis and increase the effectiveness of our Urology clinics. Once again without the Prostate Project, funds were not available for this piece of equipment.

Our new leaflet warns of the dangers of ignoring prostate symptoms



Soon to be available in surgeries around the county and at Prostate Project fund-raising events, our new leaflet uses a common motoring oil and brake check to warn about the dangers of ignoring prostate symptoms. Inside it details what those symptoms are, gives a helpful overview of prostate problems from benign to cancerous and explains in broad terms, the treatment options that are currently available.

Prostate Project People



Bruce Montgomery
Consultant Urological Surgeon
Frimley Park Hospital

Bruce trained at UCH, qualified in 1981 and was appointed to Frimley Park and Basingstoke Hospitals in June 1994. His early training years included a period at St Thomas' as the first surgical SHO working for Prof Sir Norman Browse.

Two years surgical training in Poole, convinced him he wanted to specialise in Urology and he then went to Frimley Park as a Registrar. After that it was back to St Thomas' for more training and research into bladder physiology (recording electrical signals from individual human bladder muscle cells - the first person to do so!) before his Consultant appointment to Frimley in 1994.

He already had an interest in transrectal ultrasound (TRUS) and prostate cancer and has subsequently trained the country's first independently practicing nurse, Sister Donna Higgins, who is able to do TRUS biopsies.

Bruce and Donna have now developed a unit to fast-track patients to diagnosis and treatment. A founder member of our patient support group, he also runs courses to train other nurses and doctors to do TRUS.

Watch that diet!

New research published in The Prostate Cancer Charity newsletter highlights the dangers of a high calorie diet regardless of whether the calories are gained from fat, protein or carbohydrate intake. The study was based on 444 middle aged and older men. Those at greatest risk of prostate cancer were in the highest calorie group - typically 2,600 calories a day.

If you would like to comment on any of the items in this Newsletter or provide contributions for inclusion in future issues, please write to the editor, Tim Sharp, at Monksgate, Priors Hatch Lane, Godalming Surrey GU7 2RJ. Tel: 01483 811263

Our achievements from 4 years of fund raising

HOSPITAL EQUIPMENT DONATED TO THE ROYAL SURREY COUNTY HOSPITAL & FRIMLEY PARK HOSPITAL

DATE	ITEM	COST
May 2000	Ultrasound Scanner	£29,000
MAY 2000	Video and Audio equipment with links to MATTU	£15,000
MAY 2001	Framed prints for Urology Clinic waiting room	£231
MAY 2001	Video recorder and printer	£5,856
May 2001	Urology Training models	£2,573
May 2001	Flowtron DVT prophylaxis system	£930
October 2001	Probes for Cryosurgery	£9,000
November 2001	Urology reference books	£455
December 2001	Gas assisted stirrups	£3,220
January 2002	Information booklet	£1,281
January 2002	Desktop computers with 2 monitors	£2,300
January 2002	Compaq laptop and accessories	£1,250
January 2002	Laser printers, inkjet printer and scanner with maintenance	£842
June 2002	Urology reference book	£278
October 2002	Ultrasound scanner	£39,673
March 2003	Ligasure blood sealing unit	£15,000
May 2003	Theatre camera and video link system	£21,450
September 2003	Cryosurgery system	£43,000

HOSPITAL STAFF & SUPPORT

July/Sept 2000	Specialist Urology Nurse (part funding)	£6,000
Dec/April 2002	Radiographer	£8,500
October 2002	Specialist Nurse/Radiographer training fees	£300
December 2002	Nurse Assistant (part funding)	£704
April 2003	Cryosurgery Procedures	£3,000
April 2003	Trainee Radiographer	£8,750.00

RESEARCH PROJECT

September 2003	Funds allocated for 3 year prostate cancer research project	£250,000
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Local GP'S amazing solo fund-raising efforts top £30,000

There seems to be no stopping the fund-raising powers of John Blowers, our super fit Godalming GP committee member. Not content with completing the arduous Himalayan Annapurna Trek in March 2001, he has since completed two ascents of Mount Kilimanjaro (He did it a second time because he was forced to abandon the first with exhaustion just 200 metres from the summit) and is now training hard to climb to Mount Everest base camp in March 2004.

To date he has raised more than £30,000 for local charities of which he has donated

£13,600 to The Prostate Project. He raises these amazing amounts through direct sponsorship from his many patients and friends and also from giving illustrated talks about his adventures to local Rotary and Village Hall groups around the county.

He says that future climbing adventures, will depend on the state of his knees, but after retirement in 2005 we expect him to get really serious!

Keep the exercises going John, the Prostate Project needs you!



Dr John Blowers at 19,340 feet on Mount Kilimanjaro