

Some of the symptoms you may experience following HIFU include:

- Generalised fatigue for up to a week
- Mild scrotal or penile swelling for 7—10 days
- A feeling of pressure or pain in the perineum or lower abdomen for up to 3 weeks (it is advisable to use the painkillers you are prescribed if you experience any pain)
- Urethral discharge of blood or debris (bits of dead prostate tissue) usually while the catheter is in place but this can last for up to 6 weeks
- If you have existing haemorrhoids these can be exacerbated and it is recommended that you use a haemorrhoidal cream to provide some relief
- Urinary frequency and urgency

You will find more information in the leaflet 'HIFU—What to Expect when your Catheter is Removed'.

All of the symptoms you experience should settle down spontaneously. If any of the symptoms are causing you concern or you experience any symptoms not mentioned in these leaflets, please do not hesitate to contact Rowena Couling, Urology Nurse Practitioner for further advice.



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## **HIFU**

### **(High Intensity Focused Ultrasound) For Prostate Cancer Information for Patients**

This information leaflet has been designed to try and answer as many of your questions as possible if you are considering HIFU or have been booked to undergo HIFU. It should be used in conjunction with the leaflet entitled "HIFU—What to Expect when your Catheter is Removed".

If you have any queries or concerns you would like to discuss regarding HIFU and the treatment of prostate cancer please do not hesitate to contact Rowena Couling (Urology Nurse Practitioner) on 020 7908 2169.

#### **WHAT IS HIFU?**

High intensity focused ultrasound is the use of precision-focused ultrasound waves to heat and destroy cancerous prostatic tissue without affecting healthy surrounding tissue.

The ultrasound waves create enough heat to destroy the cancerous cells and treatment is continued until all the cancerous prostatic tissue is destroyed.

HIFU is suitable for prostate cancer patients seeking minimally invasive treatment or those preferring not to have radiotherapy, where the cancer is confined to the prostate

# HIFU

## WHAT ARE THE ADVANTAGES & DISADVANTAGES OF HIFU?

### *Advantages:*

- A minimally invasive procedure
- A short hospital stay and recuperation
- The procedure can be repeated if the first HIFU has failed
- Radiation therapy and surgery are still options if the procedure fails

### *Disadvantages:*

- Urinary catheter required for 10– 14 days post-HIFU
- Urinary symptoms such as stinging when passing urine and poor flow of urine may be experienced in the first 3 months following HIFU
- Temporary urinary incontinence and stress incontinence
- Most men will be infertile due to decreased or absent ejaculatory fluid

## WHAT ARE THE RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH HIFU?

- Erectile dysfunction (impotence) in up to 30% of cases
- Urinary tract infections in 8% of cases
- Urethral stricture (scar tissue that causes a blockage of the urethra) in 2% of cases
- Recto-urethral fistula in 0.5% of cases (a channel between the prostate or bladder and the rectum that may cause diarrhoea due to urine in the rectum and infection due to bacteria in the bladder)

## WHAT IS THE PREPARATION FOR HIFU?

On the day before the procedure you will have to take a bowel preparation at home (this will be sent to you and should be taken as instructed in the letter). You may have a light breakfast and then commence on clear fluids only for the rest of the day. You are allowed to drink water until 2 hours prior to HIFU.

You will be admitted to hospital on the morning of the HIFU. You will be given an enema on admission and any necessary blood tests, ECG or x-rays will be undertaken. You will wear a pair of anti-embolism socks (like tight stockings) to prevent blood clots forming in your legs.

Your consultant will see you before you go to theatre to sign informed consent. You will also be seen by the anaesthetist.

## HOW IS HIFU PERFORMED?

You will be given a general anaesthetic. An ultrasound probe is placed in the rectum and the prostate is imaged. The ultrasound probe is then used to focus high-intensity sound waves on a particular area of the prostate, causing heat in the tissues. This heat causes prostate tissue death. The process is repeated over the whole area of prostatic tumour until all the cancerous tissue has been destroyed.

A urethral or suprapubic catheter is left in place following the procedure for drainage of urine. (The type of catheter will be discussed with you prior to the HIFU). This is because there will be swelling in the area which will impede your ability to pass urine. The catheter remains in for 7 days.

On average you will be in theatre for between 2 and 4 hours.

## WHAT HAPPENS AFTER HIFU?

You will be discharged home later on the same day as the HIFU therapy. You may eat and drink as soon as you are awake and will be encouraged to walk.

Your nurse will teach you how to look after your catheter at home and give you any supplies you may need. You will be seen by the Urology Nurse Practitioner and an appointment booked for the removal of your catheter.

Further follow-up comprises a telephone review at 4 weeks post-HIFU and then 3 monthly appointments with your consultant with a PSA check for the first year. You will then need 6 monthly checks in the second year, graduating to yearly PSA checks if all remains well.