

Ultrasound tested as treatment for prostate cancer

HOUSTON—An alternative to surgery is being tested as a treatment for prostate cancer in men whose radiation therapy has been unsuccessful. Baylor College of Medicine and St. Luke's Episcopal Hospital in Houston are one of the three U.S. sites evaluating the effectiveness of high intensity focused ultrasound (HIFU) on prostate cancer. HIFU is administered through a device inserted in the rectum. The instrument focuses ultrasound waves on a small area of the prostate, the walnut-sized gland below the bladder that makes fluid for semen. The ultrasound creates enough heat to kill the cancerous tissue, and treatment continues

until the entire prostate has been destroyed. The outpatient procedure can usually be completed within three hours, and the patient can go home after the spinal anesthetic wears off. "Our research should help determine whether HIFU can treat prostate cancer without options," said principal investigator Dr. Brian Miles, medical director of the Texas Cancer Institute at St. Luke's and associate professor of urology at Baylor. For cancer that is confined to the prostate, surgery and radiation are standard options. Complete removal of the prostate, known as the radical prostatectomy, can cause incontinence and impotence. Radiation

therapy can cause rectal and bladder injuries, difficulty urinating and impotence. For cancer that has spread or metastasized, hormone therapy and chemotherapy are usually recommended. These treatments can also cause impotence, loss of sexual desire, fatigue and osteoporosis, or bone deterioration. More than 400 patients in Europe have been treated successfully since its inception to greatly reduce such side effects as urinary tract infections and incontinence. To be eligible for the study at Baylor and St. Luke's, men must be at least 50 years of age and in good general health. Their cancer must be confined to the prostate, and

they must have undergone radiation therapy at least 18 months ago. Volunteers can call (713) 798-8514. The HIFU treatment is free. Participants will be evaluated periodically for five years for signs of cancer. In addition to Baylor and St. Luke's, the HIFU study is being conducted at Georgetown University Medical Center and the University of California at San Francisco. "More than 179,000 new cases of prostate cancer are expected to be diagnosed this year," Miles said. "If HIFU proves safe and effective, many men with this disease might be treated without side effects that can lessen their quality of life."

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HHS Awards \$3.9 Million to improve HIV/AIDS Care Delivery to AFRICAN AMERICANS and Underserved Individuals

HHS Secretary Donna E. Shalala today announced the award of \$3.9 million in planning grants to 79 public and private organizations to bolster HIV/AIDS care to African Americans and individuals in rural and underserved areas.

"These grants will help address two key challenges of this epidemic—the disproportionate impact of HIV/AIDS on the African American community and an increasing need for access to care for individuals in rural and underserved communities," said Secretary Shalala.

The 79 grants are funded under the Title III Planning Grant Program of the Ryan White Comprehensive AIDS Resources Emergency (CARE) Act administered

by HHS= Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA). Sixty grants totaling \$3 million are being awarded as part of HHS' year-old partnership with the Congressional Black Caucus to battle HIV/AIDS in communities of color. The remaining \$942,575 will be awarded to 19 organizations under the CARE Act's Rural and Underserved Initiative, which directs HIV/AIDS care to rural and underserved communities. The maximum amount of each award is \$50,000.

The planning grants are designed to help communities with inadequate HIV care resources improve their ability to deliver primary care to individuals with HIV. These grants are used specifically

to help organizations that primarily serve African Americans affected by HIV/AIDS strengthen their planning and administrative activities. Title III also funds a grant program to support outpatient HIV early intervention services for medically underserved individuals.

Funding priority is given to new programs that help improve the distribution of CARE Act programs across all states and territories, especially in rural or underserved communities where HIV disease is increasing and in areas that receive limited or no CARE Act funding.

"These funds will make a dramatic difference in the lives of African Americans and individu-

als who live in remote and underserved areas by helping to provide high-quality HIV/AIDS treatment and care," said HRSA Administrator Claude Earl Fox, M.D., M.P.H.

Since passage of the CARE Act in 1990, the Clinton administration has awarded nearly \$6.4 billion to provide primary care and support services to medically underserved individuals and families affected by HIV disease. In fiscal year 1999, \$94.3 million was appropriated to Title III planning and early intervention services grant programs.

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In the community....for the community!

October Brings Flu Season And Adult Immunization Awareness

Flu season is approaching, and Oregonians are encouraged to take advantage of special flu clinics or to call their healthcare providers to get an influenza vaccination, according to health officials at the Department of Human Services.

"This is also a good time for adults to get caught up on other important vaccinations," says Jennifer Kelly, adult immunization coordinator at the Oregon Health Division. National Adult Immunization Awareness Week runs from October 10 through 16 and emphasizes the importance of adult immunization against diphtheria, hepatitis A, hepatitis B, influenza, measles, mumps, rebecca, tetanus, varicella, and pneumococcal diseases. Adults are encouraged to contact their healthcare providers to find out which of the vaccinations they should receive.

Anyone 65 years old or older, persons of any age with health problems including heart and lung conditions, diabetes, and other chronic medical conditions should make arrangements to receive an influenza vaccination and also consider obtaining a pneumococcal vaccination, says Kelly.

Women who will be in the second or third trimester of pregnancy during influenza season are encouraged to be vaccinated against influenza. Healthcare workers and household members who have contact with individuals at highest risk of developing influenza and complications should also be immunized. "And because there are adequate supplies of vaccine, anyone who wants to avoid the miseries of influenza this year can get a shot and receive protection," Kelly states.

Information is continually collected from laboratories around the world to help predict what will be the most prevalent influenza viruses of the following season. Protection

against those new viruses is then incorporated into the vaccine. Because the virus often changes from year to year and protection is limited, it is important to be immunized against influenza every year, Kelly says. The ideal time to be immunized is from October through mid-November.

On average, more than 20,000 Americans die each year from complications of influenza and pneumonia. Influenza and pneumonia together are the fifth leading cause of death for older adults. However, in-

fluenza vaccination can prevent up to 70 percent of hospitalizations and 85 percent of deaths from influenza-related complications. Medicare covers the cost of influenza and pneumococcal pneumonia vaccinations for enrollees. For those who do not have Medicare coverage, fees are usually modest.

Adults should contact their local health departments or health-care providers to schedule a vaccination appointment or call 1-800-SAFENET for information about flu clinics in their areas.



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He also did it for the cranberries, the frozen peas, his customers, and, of course, his business.

As vice president and general manager of Kenyon Zero Storage, a cold storage provider in eastern Washington, Scott Wingert is ultimately responsible for quality and costs. Kenyon Zero Storage must meet its customer guarantee that the temperature in its refrigerated warehouses reaches no more than zero degrees. It also must keep its prices competitive.

Since it takes a lot of electricity to run Kenyon Zero Storage's refrigeration units, energy costs are a large expense for the company. So Scott looked to Pacific Power for help in improving energy efficiency and saving money.

He did it for the corn.

Scott's account manager at Pacific Power introduced him to the Energy FinAnswer program. Through Energy FinAnswer, Pacific Power provides qualified businesses expert assistance for energy analysis and financing for installing energy efficient measures that pay for themselves by reducing energy consumption.

With the help of Pacific Power's contractor, Cascade Energy Engineering, Scott received a detailed energy study, along with recommendations for improving efficiency in his storage units.

Then, with financing arranged through Energy FinAnswer, Scott hired Cascade Energy Engineering, Industrial Service and Electric,

PermaCold Engineering and Tech-Systems to put the study findings into action.

The results have been outstanding. In just one year, Kenyon Zero Storage has been able to cut its refrigeration energy use by 35 percent. While keeping its zero degree guarantee.

"We've had very definite, noticeable relief in both energy usage and costs. Just as predicted, if not better," Scott said.

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