

Summer 2015

This is the quarterly newsletter for Urology Group of Athens patients and friends alike to stay up-to-date on urinary issues, health and wellness.

“Our High Tech Side”

“Radioactive Seed Implants”

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“Technology And Overactive Bladders”

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“Our High Tech Side”

As much as Urology Group of Athens is committed to its mission... “where the human side of healthcare is here to stay” ... we are also staying ahead of the pack in new and innovative treatments and diagnostic options.



Urology Group of Athens’ Doctor Blankenship and Doctor Schwender have helped pioneer the development and expansion of robotic surgery and the daVinci surgical system in the Greater Athens area. Now 10 years since the advent of robotic surgical systems, urologists are emerging as the world leaders in the use of such technology.

As Dr. Blankenship is quoted in Southern Distinction magazine as saying, “We now use the daVinci System to perform procedures that historically involved large incisions and extended recovery, but with the innovative use of robotic surgery, we have been able to successfully perform surgery through very small incisions with top precision.”

Today there are other areas of innovation and technology that Urology Group of Athens is pioneering. ***In this newsletter, we want to share with you some of the other innovative things happening that we are embracing.***

“Radioactive Seed Implants And Prostate Tumors”

Radioactive “seed” implants are proving to be effective for patients with low-grade, low volume prostate tumors. The seeds deliver a higher dose of radiation while reducing the risk of complications to surrounding tissue.

The radioactive seeds are implanted into the prostate gland using ultrasound for guidance. The procedure is what is termed as “minimally invasive.”

The implants produce very targeted radiation exposure to the prostate with limited damage to surrounding tissues.

In some cases, the procedure can replace traditional external-beam radiation, which often requires multiple visits over a couple of months. Technology impacts not only the “seeds” used in the treatment, but it is also used to customize the actual mapping of the treatment plan tailored individually for each patient.

This innovative technique has proven to be very effective with patients who have a cancer that is contained within the prostate and is not very aggressive.

Minimally Invasive Surgery Using The Freezing Cold

Cryosurgery is a new treatment technique to treat patients with kidney and prostate cancers.

The procedure uses extreme cold to destroy abnormal or diseased tissue. It allows the physicians to target very small areas with little blood loss and fewer complications.

As Dr. Oliver shares, "It is a minimally invasive treatment option for patients with kidney or prostate cancers in which we here at Urology Group of Athens work in tandem with interventional radiologists."

Dr. Blankenship continues to note, "We are destroying disease tissues with the newest cryosurgical technique in which we inject the prostate with ultra-thin probes cooled by argon gas. The procedure can be done on an outpatient basis and can be performed without an incision, resulting in minimal side effects or blood loss."

Many times, the patient is only under either general or epidural anesthesia and experiences no pain. Following the procedure, patients wait in the recovery room until the anesthesia wears off and then, in many cases, they can go home. A catheter may be used for about a week following the treatment.



"We are destroying disease tissues with the newest cryosurgical techniques"

Dr. Blankenship

Exercise Guided By High Tech Smarts

Urology Group of Athens designed treatment programs in which patients come into the office and work in tandem with the nurse practitioners in guided sessions of exercise, electrical stimulation and monitoring. Some have described the process of having a high-tech, medically smart workout coach!

"A number of my patients have heard about what's sometimes is referred to as Kagel exercises that strengthen the pelvic floor muscles after encountering things like pregnancy, childbirth, surgery, aging and being overweight," says Dr. Catherine Schwender.

As Baby Boomers age, more individuals are facing the challenge of overactive bladders. More advertising airs on television sets promoting options to management overactive bladders.

"What's very interesting now is that there is a way in which we can use a combination of both computer monitoring of the muscles and electrical stimulation to further enhance the historic Kagel exercise technique," adds Dr. Schwender.

The electrical stimulation causes the muscles to contract and helps guide individuals in identifying the correct muscles to improve.

"We can use a combination of computer monitoring and electrical stimulation"

Dr. Schwender

“This is a treatment approach we are using at Urology Group of Athens”

Dr. Oliver



“High Tech For Overactive Bladders”

A new emerging treatment for overactive bladders is a non-drug, non-surgical treatment branded under the name Urgent® PC. The treatment uses a hand-held device that sends low level electric impulses through a small, slim needle electrode inserted in a patient’s ankle.

“This is a treatment approach we are using here at Urology Group of Athens. During a average 30-minute treatment, mild impulses from the stimulator travel through the needle electrode, along your leg and to the nerves in a patient’s pelvis that control the function of the bladder,” according to Dr. Oliver.

As many as 80% of patients using Urgent® PC treatment are experiencing improvement, even if other treatments such as medications, have failed.

Patients often participate in an initial series of 12 treatments scheduled about a week apart. Most of the treatment sessions last about 30 minutes per session using the hand-held electronic device.

After the 12 treatments the patient and the doctor together evaluate whether the therapy is appropriate, assisting in control of the bladder and the time between follow-up treatment and monitoring.



“Five Facts For Men”



#1 – More cases of Prostate Cancer will be diagnosed in men than any other form of major cancer

#2 – The five year survival rate of Prostate Cancer is nearly 100% when detected early

#3 – There are more cases of Prostate Cancer diagnosed each year than Breast Cancer

#4 -- Every three minutes, an American man finds out he has Prostate Cancer

#5 – Prostate Cancer often has no early warning signs or symptoms

Source: Michigan Institute of Urology 2015

Number 5:
Prostate Cancer often
has no warning signs

“Testing is therefore
important!”

“High Touch Summer Salad”

This is a great way to stay cool and be cool this summer with your friends!

There are some very innovative ways in which technology is advancing treatments at Urology Group of Athens, but its Summer and time for some great high touch sensations that are actually very good for you!



Here's a salad featured on the Urology Care Foundation website:

Ingredients:

2 cups blueberries

4 medium pears, diced

One 4 1/2-pound piece of watermelon, peeled, seeded, and cut into 1-inch cubes (about 4 cups)

3 avocados, halved and cut into cubes (avocados are rich in heart-healthy omega-3 fatty acids and may reduce inflammation)

Optional Garnishes:

Chopped fresh mint leaves

Grated fresh ginger (ginger may reduce inflammation)

Drizzle of honey or maple syrup (or mix 1 part of honey or maple syrup with 2 parts of a trusted brand of pear or apple juice to create a dressing)

Directions:

Gently mix ingredients in a large bowl.

Add one (or more) of the optional garnishes for a little extra flavor.

Enjoy... Serves 6-8!

For more information on the different topics addressed in the newsletter, we encourage you to check out Patient Resources available on www.urologygroupofathens.com

Check out the next issue of
STAY HEALTHY & BE WELL
In Fall 2015